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The Confederate Triumvirate: Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, and the Making of the Lost Cause, 1863-1940

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by

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Dedication

To my parents and grandparents, my friends and colleagues, and to my wife and best friend, Victoria

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Abstract

While numerous historians have studied and written about the lives and deeds of Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee, and Jefferson Davis, fewer have conducted analyses of these three individuals' popular memories. This study considers how the memory of these three Confederate leaders formed the foundation of the Lost Cause. From 1863 through the 1940s, white southerners held each of these three men in high esteem, proclaiming them as heroes to the dead Confederate ideology. Orators and writers who built the Lost Cause in South consistently utilized their memories to argue in favor of the righteousness of the Confederate cause and the legality of secession. Jefferson Davis himself spoke out strongly in favor of these ideals in the 1870s and 1880s. Robert E. Lee also played a large role in the creation of his perfect memory. While Stonewall Jackson did not actively contribute to his own popular memory, his prowess on the battlefield and his martyrdom during the war provided plenty of fodder for memorialization. These three men became the ultimate representations of the Confederacy and the white South. The adulation felt towards them culminated in the massive, stone relief at Stone Mountain, Georgia. This study examines how the popular memories of each man were shaped by them and those around them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Introduction

In the summer of 1914, Stone Mountain stood as a massive natural landmark overlooking the Georgia landscape, untouched by man. It was during that summer that Atlanta attorney and son of a Confederate veteran William H. Terrell first proposed that Stone Mountain should serve as a memorial to the Confederacy. He argued that the mountain's incredible size and ability to withstand the elements made it the perfect location for "a story of one of the most remarkable events that ever illuminated a people's history."[1] Terrell made his mark by advocating for the memorial in an editorial in the *Atlanta Constitution* in May 1914. Three weeks later, John Temple Graves, an Atlantan editor of the *New York American*, echoed Terrell's comments and published a lengthy editorial in the June 14 issue of the *Georgian*. This editorial was much more detailed than Terrell's and argued that Stone Mountain's size was nature's way of asking for a memorial to the Confederacy. He declared that the memorial should be a seventy feet high statue of Robert E. Lee in full Confederate uniform.

Although the proposed Lee statue did not become a reality, Helen Jemison Plane, former president of the Georgia State Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, read the two editorials in 1914 and took it upon herself to see Stone Mountain transformed into a memorial to the Confederacy. Plane, by then eighty-five years old, wrote that she had a "wonderful vision" of a Confederate memorial and wrote a letter to the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, noting:

> Now the time has arrived for us to cease the erection of small and perishable local monuments such as were erected before the UDC organization began the more costly ones to Davis, Lee and others, and more recently the one to our dead at Arlington, and

[1] William H. Terrell, "A Commanding Suggestion," *Atlanta Constitution*, May 26, 1914.

> concentrate our efforts on one which shall be a shrine for the South and of which all Americans may be justly proud.[2]

The Venable Brothers, who owned the mountain, deeded the north face of the mountain to the UDC in 1916 and tasked the UDC with completing the sizeable memorial within 12 years. Gutzon Borglum, the famous sculptor, was commissioned to complete the carving. By 1925, he had abandoned the project and left to work on Mount Rushmore. Numerous efforts were made to fund the project over the next few decades, and the carving was not completed until 1972.

The Stone Mountain design – Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee, and Jefferson Davis astride their trusted horses, Traveller, Little Sorrel, and Blackjack – acts as a massive display of how the public remembered these men and the southern narrative of the Civil War. The Stone Mountain carving begs the immediate question of why Lee, Jackson, and Davis? There were many men and women that faithfully served the Confederacy during the war. In the end, the UDC concluded that Jackson, Lee, and Davis should be immortalized on the mountain. The Stone Mountain carving made a monumental statement about southern history while itself being the product of history. From 1865 to 1914, white southerners worked tirelessly to engineer their own narrative of the Civil War, and they established Jackson, Lee, and Davis as the three central pillars of Confederate memory. Stone Mountain merely formalized an already long-standing narrative.

* * *

While Stone Mountain serves as a vignette for Confederate public memory, this dissertation examines the development of the memories of Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee,

[2] Helen Jemison Plane to the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, 14 January 1916, Helen Plane Papers, Special Collections Department, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia. One of the most complete analyses of the founding of Stone Mountain as a Confederate memorial may be found in David B. Freeman, *Carved in Stone: The History of Stone Mountain* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997).

and Jefferson Davis developed during the post-Civil War era through the 1930s. In an attempt to cope with the loss of slavery and the Civil War, Southern whites championed the memories of Confederate heroes like Lee, Jackson, and Davis. Northern whites, dedicated to completing the reunion of the country, willingly accepted the mythologized versions of these men. White southerners used popular culture, such as fiction, poems, and plays, and established monuments to their still-living and fallen heroes in order to redefine their cultural heritage and simultaneously cement white supremacy as a staple of the New South. Thus, I argue that white southerners carefully constructed specific memories of Jackson, Lee, and Davis to cope with defeat and instill a sense of white cultural identity and superiority in the six decades after the Civil War.

This dissertation will be broken down into four chapters. The first three chapters explore the individuals in turn. Though their lives and experiences obviously overlapped, treating them individually allows the distinctive uses of each to become clear. The final chapter ties them all together. The first chapter will examine the memory of Stonewall Jackson and how his actions and personality during the Civil War helped foster a sense of Confederate nationalism and religious divinity for the people of the South. Ironically, Jackson's memory benefitted from his untimely death in the spring of 1863. Newspapers, journals, and church sermons, in particular, altered his image to that of the martyr to the cause. For decades after the Civil War ended, Jackson was at the center of many "what if" scenarios related to the Confederacy's ability to win the Civil War. To many white southerners, Jackson was the key to the victory that might have been. There were some, notably religious leaders, who assuaged southern grief by arguing that Jackson was taken from them as punishment for idolizing him. As such, Jackson's memory occupies a strange dichotomy in white southern memory. Had he lived, they believed, the

Confederacy would have won the Civil War. Some also began the metaphorical search for the "next Jackson." Thus, there was substantial confusion in the South about how to move forward during the war after his death. After his death, Jackson's memory became the driving force behind Confederate nationalism. His sacrifice created a memory of Jackson that was permanently associated with a martyr for their "holy" cause. Jackson's memory declined in significance and visibility during Reconstruction, but in the decades that followed he reemerged as a symbol of the Lost Cause, thanks in large part to the public efforts of his wife, who authored a memoir of his life. She included, omitted, and speculated upon details that altered his memory to the one she wanted to preserve.

The second chapter will examine the memory of Robert E. Lee who fought for the Confederacy and later helped rebuild the South through the education of southern youth. Lee's actions during the war endeared him to white Southerners who held him in a slightly higher regard than Jackson if only because he survived until the bitter end. White southerners spun Lee's surrender to Grant from an admission of defeat into a noble sacrifice, an attempt to abdicate and rebuild the shattered South rather than continue to let the Union ravage the region. Following his surrender, Lee undertook the other career that helped cement his legacy as a father of the South: college president. Lee's tenure as president of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) demonstrated his desire to prepare younger generations of southern men for the new era. Lee's elitist upbringing and his loyalty to antebellum attitudes of race and class further endeared him to white southerners who wished to return to the way southern society functioned before the Civil War. The latter part of the chapter involves Lee's evolution into a national hero by the end of the nineteenth century.

The third chapter will examine the memory of Jefferson Davis. Davis lived nearly twenty years longer than Lee, so the chronological time frame for the Davis chapter is the longest of the three individuals. Davis is a curious figure in the overall picture of the Lost Cause and Southern white cultural identity. As Confederate president, he had the unenviable job of fostering Confederate nationalism and creating a cohesive nation out of a collection of states who resisted centralized governmental authority. A large portion of the Confederate citizenry believed him to be an ineffective president who often overstepped his bounds. At the end of the war, Davis fled and was imprisoned, drawing derision from white Southerners who viewed him as a coward. However, his two years in federal prison softened white Southerners' view of him. After he was released, he came to be viewed as a man who physically suffered for the cause, effectively making him a martyr.

In his later years, Davis made numerous public speeches defending the legality of secession and righteousness of the Confederate cause. Davis was also instrumental in recreating his own image and role in the memory of the Civil War. By adhering to the broad scope of the Confederate cause and ignoring his own failings during the war, he minimized his faults and cast himself as a strong advocate of states' rights and the Confederacy. Parts of the white South were not inclined to listen to his potentially divisive rhetoric in the 1870s as they strove for reconciliation with the North. In the 1880s, however, Davis's words gained a greater traction with the southern public and former Confederates.

The fourth chapter will examine the ways in which the memories of these figures come together to form a cohesive Lost Cause narrative that was deeply ingrained in twentieth century American culture, North and South. Confederate activists in the South sought to create many different forms of popular culture and literature in order to normalize the concept of the "noble"

Lost Cause. While much of this popular culture dealt generally with the Confederate war effort, there were many items that centered on specific individuals. Lee in particular was the subject of a number of epic poems, novels, and children's stories.[3] Stonewall Jackson, Jefferson Davis, and Lee were the subjects of many songs that were frequently played at official events, including political rallies.[4] The chapter will also consider how professional historians of the early twentieth century knowingly or unknowingly utilized Lost Cause rhetoric to distort the memories of these individuals with the most notable being Douglas Southall Freeman. Finally, it explores the perspectives of a number of critics – northern and southern, black and white – who sought to complicate the simplistic narrative of the Lost Cause and the three men at its center.

Clearly, the history of the "Lost Cause" plays an integral role in this dissertation. The Lost Cause was a memory-based movement that began in the 1870s and peaked in the first few decades of the twentieth century. It stemmed from the pain white southerners felt over their defeat in the Civil War. They were unable, or unwilling, to admit that their cause was not just. Instead, they strove to portray the South and Confederate ideals in the best possible light. The movement was predicated on vindicating the southern cause by idolizing the virtues of the antebellum South, portraying the Civil War as a struggle to defend the "southern way of life" and states' rights in the face of overwhelming Union numbers and resources, and, perhaps most importantly, obfuscating the poignant fact that slavery was the primary cause of the war. By eliminating slavery from the equation and relying on the other pillars of the movement, white southerners consciously altered the narrative of the war and created decades of misinformation in

[3] See examples Flora Ellice Stevens, *Lee, An Epic* (Kansas City, MO: Burton Publishing Company, 1917); Ralph Cannon, *Lee on the Levee* (Chicago: n.p., 1940); Louise Clark, *General Lee and Santa Claus. Mrs. Louise Clark's Christmas Gift to Her Little Southern Friends* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1867). Although the third source was published in 1867, it nevertheless demonstrates an attempt to indoctrinate a younger generation about the spirit of the Confederacy through popular culture.

[4] See J. H. Snow, "Jefferson Davis Grand March"; L. Rieves and B. A. Whaples, "Stonewall Jackson's Prayer"; A. J. Ryan, "The Sword of Robert Lee"; M. Deeves, "Stonewall's Requiem"; Charles Young, "Stonewall Jackson's Grand March."

the history of the Civil War era. White southerners worked diligently to ingrain these beliefs into subsequent generations in order to preserve their alternate narrative of the war.[5]

The Lost Cause had social, cultural, and political impacts. It pervaded popular culture and literature, as many publications from the South during the Lost Cause era repeated many of the myths associated with the vindication of the Confederacy and its ideals. Many of these publications directly influenced historians of the early- to mid-twentieth century, further contributing to misinformation about the Civil War. Confederate monuments were one of the most prominent physical manifestations of the Lost Cause in the South. Women were largely the driving force behind the erection of these monuments. These monuments were originally erected to memorialize the men who fought and died for the Confederacy. But by the 1890s, the Lost Cause took a much stronger hold in the South, and organizations like the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans erected hundreds of statues through the 1930s as testaments to the southern cause. These statues were always unveiled with great fanfare, and the orations given honored the soldiers of the Confederacy, but they were largely echo

[5] There are innumerable studies on the Lost Cause of the Confederacy and reconciliation in the United States. Some of the most important works are David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001); Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Terry A. Barhardt, *Albert Taylor Bledsoe: Defender of the Old South and Architect of the Lost Cause* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011); Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003); Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, ed. *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Gary W. Gallagher, *Jubal A. Early, the Lost Cause, and Civil War History: A Persistent Legacy* (Marquette: Marquette University Press, 1995); William C. Davis, *The Cause Lost: Myths and Realities of the Confederacy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996); Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865-1900* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1973); John A. Simpson, *Edith D. Pope and Her Nashville Friends: Guardians of the Lost Cause in the Confederate Veteran* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980); Elizabeth Fahs and Joan Waugh, eds. *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998).

chambers of Lost Cause rhetoric. Speakers routinely argued in favor of the noble southern cause, the morality of the white South, and the legality of secession.[6]

The three topics of this dissertation, Jackson, Lee, and Davis, were all major characters in the reshaping of the Civil War narrative. They each represented important aspects of the glorification of the Lost Cause and the Confederacy. Lost Cause proponents used Jackson's piety and his military accomplishments to demonstrate the divinity of the Confederate cause. They argued that God would not have given the Confederacy such a successful, devout Christian if their cause was not just. Lee was also gifted on the battlefield, and he was also a devout Christian. But he differed from Jackson in that he survived through the war and used his remaining years to educate southern youth while arguing for reconciliation. Lee's status allowed Lost Cause proponents to claim that they favored reconciliation with the North even though Lost Cause rhetoric was mostly divisive. It painted the North as the aggressors in the war and notably left out the agency of African Americans. As David W. Blight has pointed out, white southerners argued for reconciliation, but on their own terms.[7] Davis, on the other hand, actively preached about the nobility of the Confederate cause, the legality of secession, and the aggression of the North. His words instilled pride in the white South and helped rally many white southerners to support the Lost Cause. Davis was the bridge between many southerners who wished to leave the

[6] See Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*; R. B. Rosenberg, *Living Monuments: Confederate Soldiers' Homes in the New South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Thomas J. Brown, *Civil War Canon: Sites of Confederate Memory in South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); M. Keith Harris, *Across the Bloody Chasm: The Culture of Commemoration Among Civil War Veterans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2014); Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson, ed., *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003); William B. Lees and Frederick P. Gaske, *Recalling Deeds Immortal: Florida Monuments to the Civil War* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014); Gould B. Hagler, Jr., *Georgia's Confederate Monuments: In Honor of a Fallen Nation* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2014); Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005); William D. Richardson, Ron McNich-Su, and J. Michael Martinez, ed., *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001); Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[7] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 2.

war in the past and those who wished the change the narrative of the war to help alleviate their grief.

Lost Cause leaders freely altered the memories of the three men to suit their needs and ambitions. Their faults were excused or erased altogether. The Lost Cause myth was predicated on the infallibility of the Confederacy and its leaders, making it an act of social suicide to criticize certain Lost Cause characters, most notably Robert E. Lee. If the Confederacy had fought a noble crusade for independence against northern tyranny, its leaders must be men of Christian devotion, honor, and duty. If these pillars upon which the Lost Cause stood were weakened, it threatened to unravel the fabric of the foundational argument. Thus, nay-sayers were roundly criticized, considered outsiders akin to scalawags, and excluded from future memorial celebrations.

Family members, particularly women, were instrumental in shaping the popular memories of the three individuals. Stonewall Jackson's sister-in-law, Margaret Junkin Preston, wrote extensively about his life and personality. Her writing was largely well-researched and helped stimulate early biographies of Jackson. His widow, Mary Anna Jackson, copied Preston's work and prepared a lengthy memoir of Jackson near the end of the nineteenth century. Her memoir was fiercely combative of any and all criticism towards her husband. By taking authoritative control of Jackson's narrative, she effectively steered the public's memory in the direction she wanted. In the 1880s, Lee's children and other relatives solidified his place in the memory of the white South. His son, George Washington Custis Lee, and his daughter, Mary Custis Lee, wrote many letters detailing their father's exploits, commenting upon representations of his likeness through art and popular culture, and attending or advising commemorations to him. It is during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that many Lee biographies and

tales arise, many of them written by women.[8] Assisting Jefferson Davis in combating his adversaries and spreading his pro-Confederate message were his wife, Varina, and daughter, Winnie. Their writing and public appearances, particularly after Davis fell ill at the end of his life, undoubtedly helped maintain his image as the martyr who led the Confederacy to the best of his abilities and suffered greatly for the cause.

Other women feature prominently in the popular culture of the Lost Cause. Sarah Anne Ellis Dorsey was a prominent author, most famous for her biography of Louisiana Governor Henry Watkins Allen. Later in her life, she befriended Davis, and he dictated much of his *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* to her.[9] Mary Chesnut was a close friend of Jefferson and Varina Davis and steadfastly supported Davis throughout the war as were those close to her. Her diary entries in May of 1865 indicate a stoic defense of Davis following his capture, when he was allegedly wearing a woman's dress in order to sneak away. Other influential women included Ann E. Snyder whose book, *The Civil War from a Southern Standpoint*, characterized Stonewall Jackson as "the grandest soldier in the greatest war of modern times."[10] Edith D. Pope led *The Confederate Veteran*, a popular Nashville-based magazine. Initially founded by S. A. Cunningham in 1893, Pope took over upon Cunningham's death in 1913, using it as the official voice of the United Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. By 1900, the magazine had a readership of around 20,000, and the membership grew afterward to reach a national audience.

[8] Some examples of this include Clark, *General Lee and Santa Claus*; Stevens, *Lee; An Epic*; and Mary L. Williamson, *Life of Robert E. Lee* (Richmond: Johnson Publishing Company, 1918).
[9] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The Literary Percys: Family History, Gender & The Southern Imagination* (Macon: Mercer University, 1994), 165-166.
[10] Ann E. Snyder, *The Civil War from a Southern Standpoint* (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1890), 148.

If white women were arguably the biggest supporters of the Lost Cause, African Americans were its most important critics. Black leaders actively spoke out against the memorialization of the Confederacy. They recognized that the perpetuation of Confederate ideals threatened to validate the tenets of white supremacy and Jim Crow. The Lost Cause erased slavery and race from the narrative of the Civil War, distorting the past and endangering black lives and rights in the present. African American newspapers and the scholarship of certain individuals encompass most of the sources used in examining how they affected the memories of Lee, Jackson, and Davis.

I intended to include African American perspectives throughout, but in many of the sources I examined had relatively little to say about Jackson, Lee, and Davis, at least until the early twentieth century. African Americans created some of the most significant memorial work of the Civil War era, but evidence suggests that the Confederate triumvirate was not particularly central to this process. Black commentators offered trenchant commentary on the memory of the Civil War and the Lost Cause. In venues that ranged from Emancipation Day celebrations to newspaper columns to learned scholarly discourses, African Americans insisted upon the centrality of slavery, emancipation, and civil rights as legacies of the Civil War. For all of this popular and scholarly activity, however, my rather brief analysis of sources indicates that black critics had relatively little to say about the three figures under consideration here. Until the very end of the nineteenth century, the memories of Jackson, Lee, and Davis were largely left to white southerners.[11]

[11] See Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*; Genevieve Fabre and Robert O'Meally, ed., *History and Memory in African-American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Blight, *Race and Reunion*; Mitchell Alan Kachun, "Before the Eyes of All Nations: African-American Identity and Historical Memory at the Centennial Exposition of 1876," *Pennsylvania History* 65, no. 3 (1998): 300-323; Mitchell Alan Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom: Memory and Meaning in African American Emancipation Celebrations, 1808-1915* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); Kathleen Clark, "Celebrating Freedom: Emancipation Day Celebrations and African American Memory in the Early Reconstruction South," and Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, "Redeeming Southern Memory:

Importantly, my analysis of African American voices regarding the Confederate triumvirate is not exhaustive. Rather, this dissertation creates new opportunities for scholars to examine the memories of Jackson, Lee, and Davis in the context of the postwar African American community. As the historiography has demonstrated, African Americans have been criminally underrepresented in post-Civil War literature. Although scholars are working diligently to establish and expand African American agency in the post-Civil War era, there is still much to be done. While this dissertation shows that white southerners were the primary keepers of the triumvirate's collective memories, African Americans do begin to engage with these memories beginning in the twentieth century. Thus, I hope other scholars can utilize the train of thought this dissertation creates regarding African Americans' sentiments regarding individual Confederate memory.

After 1890, as the Lost Cause solidified its grasp on American culture, black commentators were increasingly likely to engage with the memories of Jackson, Lee, and Davis. Of particular significance was W. E. B. DuBois's 1890 speech, "Jefferson Davis as a Representative of Civilization." In his speech, DuBois criticized the racial hierarchy of the United States, using Davis as "typical Teutonic Hero" because of his role as president of the Confederacy. For DuBois, Davis represented necessary leadership qualities while also acknowledging the racist ideology present in Confederate memory, which Davis helped perpetuate after the war.[12]

At this point, a few words on sources seem to be in order: in conducting my primary research, I discovered that there are innumerable pieces of literature, art, and popular culture

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The Negro Race History, 1874-1915," in W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Silber, *The Romance of Reunion*.

[12] W.E.B. DuBois, "Jefferson Davis as a Representative of Civilization," Baccalaureate disquisition, Harvard University, 2-3.

associated with Jackson, Lee, and Davis. Memorial celebrations and monument dedications played a vital role in shaping the postwar memories of Lee, Jackson, and Davis. These were typically grandiose celebrations featuring parades and speeches by prominent individuals such as politicians or Confederate officers. These ceremonies were typically accompanied by "programmes" detailing the organizers, the organization or people who helped raise the funds for the monuments, the speakers, any Confederate veteran units that marched in the parade, and more. Any number of these ceremonies featured an opening prayer and, in great fortune to researchers, these programmes included transcripts of the dedication speeches. These speeches give great insight into the changing memories of these prominent figures based both on where the monuments were erected and the year in which they were erected. Typically, these men were heaped in praise and were oftentimes identified as being a noble "countryman" or servant of the people.[13] These monument dedication ceremonies created foundations for popular memory of the Confederacy and men like Lee, Jackson, and Davis.

This dissertation also examines the production of plays, poems, music, novels, and other forms of popular. These sources provide a unique perspective for analyzing their changing memories. Novels like Mary Johnston's *The Long Roll* utilized historical fact while adding in elements of fiction to create a semi-accurate, yet embellished version of Jackson. White southerners used poems and songs to perpetuate the belief that Robert E. Lee was a man with no faults, and the catchy tunes that accompanied the lyrics helped solidify those beliefs in listeners' minds. A play about Jefferson Davis dramatized his entire life, relationships, and military and political career to the point that it only had a loose framework of historical fact. Audience members were presented with a heavily distorted and complicated view of the former

[13] "Countryman" or its variations were usually coupled with an association to their home state, which suggests a desire to perpetuate a spirit of Confederate nationalism. At the very least, it demonstrates a continual disassociation from the idea of reconciliation, but not necessarily reunification.

Confederate president that presented him as an American patriot who also espoused Confederate ideals. Most importantly, these plays, poems, songs, and novels altered the images of these men to lessen the devastation wrought by the Civil War, which was, as we now know, brought on by the South's secession and the firing on Fort Sumter. They were not leaders of a rebellion; they were simply Americans who stood up for what they believed in. Thus, the memories of the men and the Civil War itself were changed in order to absolve the South of any wrongdoing.

Autobiographies, memoirs, and popular histories by white southern authors were some of the most influential components of Lost Cause memory. Many former soldiers took it upon themselves to chronicle their years of service during the Civil War, and many of them took stances on how Lee, Jackson, and Davis should be perceived by the public. Often, former soldiers praised all of these men, and only a few exceptions openly criticized them, notably Edward Porter Alexander and James Longstreet. Other white scholars, such as Edward A. Pollard and John Esten Cooke, wrote extensively about the character and exploits of Jackson, Lee, and Davis, although some of their work lacked reputable sources or embellished facts for the sake of creating compelling characters or events. While most Southerners tended to view Lee, Jackson, and Davis in a positive light, there were a number of outliers. Jefferson Davis appeared to have the most detractors within the Southern ranks. Former Confederate Generals Joseph E. Johnston and P.G.T. Beauregard fought publicly with Davis throughout the postwar years. Davis had other detractors such as North Carolina Governor Zebulon Vance. Although Jackson and Lee were not nearly as criticized nor engaged in public feuds, these detracting accounts help paint a more complete picture of their memories.

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The Civil War may be the most written-upon topic in American history. The history of the Civil War encompasses biographies, military history, cultural history, social and economic history, and memory and memorialization. As such, the historiography of the Civil War and Jackson, Lee, and Davis is also vast. Lee is certainly the most written-upon figure of the three subjects of this dissertation, so it was difficult in determining which sources to actively discuss within the introduction and chapters. The same can be said for Jackson and Davis, although to a lesser extent. However, every book I have consulted regarding the biographies and memories of Jackson, Lee, and Davis, fail to discuss the significance of remembering them together. While each man was important in a certain way to the memory of the Confederacy, no historian has actively compared their memories and analyzed how they were remembered in a broader sense. The closest anyone comes to doing that is Gaines M. Foster, and he only dedicates a few pages to the idea. In the Lost Cause, there were clearly defined leaders and icons, not just the memorialization of the Confederacy itself. This dissertation critically analyzes the roles these individuals played in the perpetuation of the Lost Cause. Each individual's memory acted as a pillar of the Lost Cause, and there have been no substantial studies about how each memory drastically affected the Lost Cause and southern Civil War narrative.

Biographies of Stonewall Jackson typically center on his early life and his military leadership during the Civil War. In this case, there are a number of biographies that execute these analyses well.[14] James I. Robertson's *Stonewall Jackson: The Man, The Soldier, The Legend* is

[14] See Frank E. Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1957); Ethan S. Rafuse, *Stonewall Jackson: A Biography* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011); Donald A. Davis, *Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); John Bowers, *Stonewall Jackson: Portrait of a Soldier* (New York: Morrow, 1989); Gary W. Gallagher, "The Making of a Hero and the Persistence of a Legend: Stonewall Jackson during the Civil War and in Popular History" and "Revisiting the 1862 and 1864 Valley Campaigns: Stonewall Jackson and Jubal Early in the Shenandoah," in Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998); Bevin Alexander, *Lost Victories: The Military Genius of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Holt, 1992); Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Byron Farwell, *Stonewall: A Biography of General Thomas J. Jackson* (New York: W.

arguably the most well-researched and complete analysis of Jackson's life and military command during the Civil War. Robertson's book is thoroughly researched and should be used as a foundation for the study of Jackson's life and his military command. S. C. Gwynne's recent volume, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson*, reads much in the same manner as Robertson, albeit shorter and with less depth. Gwynne fails to demonstrate the complete reaction of Jackson's death, as it is crammed into less than twenty pages at the end of the book. Lost in many of the biographies of Jackson is how his memory endured throughout the rest of the war and into the postwar period. Wallace Hettle's *Inventing Stonewall Jackson: A Civil War Hero in History and Memory* was invaluable because of its in-depth examination of the non-fiction related to Jackson. Hettle's focus on non-fiction, however, leaves gaps in the understanding of how the public came to remember Jackson, as popular culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were effective methods at shaping memory. Hettle also incorporates the idea of martyrdom associated with Jackson.[15]

Robert E. Lee has the broadest historiography of the three men. Early histories of Lee perpetuated many Lost Cause tropes that portrayed Lee as the perfect southern gentleman, incapable of error, and of the utmost piety.[16] Thomas Connelly's *The Marble Man* (1977) was one of the first attempts to refute much of the Lost Cause image that became associated with

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W. Norton and Co., 1993); Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Robert K. Krick, *The Smoothbore Volley That Doomed the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002); George C. Rable, "Stonewall Jackson: The Christian Soldier in Life, Death, and Defeat," in *Lee and His Generals: Essays in Honor of T. Harry Williams* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012).

[15] Hettle, 4.

[16] See Elizabeth Kinloch Solem, *Robert E. Lee* (Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson and Co., 1950); David McDowell, *Robert E. Lee* (New York: Random House, 1953); Margaret Sanborn, *Robert E. Lee: The Complete Man, 1861-1870* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1967); Ollinger Crenshaw, *General Lee's College* (New York: Random House, 1969).

Lee.[17] Although Connelly is able to demonstrate that Lee was much more complex than how Douglas Southall Freeman portrayed him, Connelly nevertheless gets wrapped up in inconsistencies that stem from Lost Cause rhetoric. Emory Thomas (1991) built upon Connelly's work and showed that Lee was criticized much more heavily following the end of the Civil War than previous works tended to show. Thomas' biography is like many recent biographies that tend to emphasize that Lee was a flawed man or, as Thomas puts it, a tragic hero.[18] One of the more prominent topics is his frequent association with George Washington, his relative-in-law. Several studies have analyzed how and why Lee became associated with Washington and how that impacted his memory among white southerners who believed Washington was one of their own. According to Richard B. McCaslin, Lee was one of the originators of the Washington association because of his love and admiration for the famous Americans. Thus, it is important to understand Lee's own thought processes in order to better flesh out his place in historical memory.

Because Lee never wrote a memoir, historians have only able to speculate as to how Lee felt about certain matters, especially during Reconstruction. Michael Fellman's *The Making of Robert E. Lee* is one of the best in-depth analyses of Lee's letters and papers to create a clearer portrait of a man far different than his Lost Cause persona. Fellman's Lee is inherently flawed; a man who enjoyed the company of women, actively flirted with them while still married, harbored racist sentiments (but that's on par for the time period), actively abhorred

[17] Thomas L. Connelly, *The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and His Image in American Society* (New York: Knopf, 1977).

[18] Lost Cause authors personified Lee as being simply better than his fellow southerners because of his military skill, his duty and honor, and his piety. To them, he was infallible and anyone who criticized him was wrong. Connelly and Thomas were some of the earliest historians to rectify this error, and many historians of the last few decades have built upon their work. This has also created new avenues of analysis in understanding Lee and his legacy.

Reconstruction, and was a stern, overbearing parent to his children.[19] Building off of Fellman's book, Elizabeth Brown Pryor's *Reading the Man* further analyzes Lee's letters to further clarify, yet complicate the image of Lee. By using these, Pryor demonstrates a new understanding of Lee through his penmanship. Pryor's use of previously unknown letters is important within the Lee historiography. At the same time, the consistent publication of new Lee books only serves to further complicate our understanding of the man.

Jefferson Davis's historiography follows a similar pattern as Lee's. Older biographies of Davis perpetuated Lost Cause tropes of Davis such as his patriotism and resolve in defending state's rights.[20] Like Lee, historians have only relatively recently begun to combat Lost Cause tropes that became embedded in Davis's memory.[21] Michael Ballard's *A Long Shadow* (1986) effectively traces the roots of Davis' martyr-like image as a prisoner of the federal government to the redemption he achieved through his public tours. While it is important to consider how Davis struggled to keep the Confederacy alive, there is much more to understanding the man than

[19] Alan T. Nolan, *Lee Considered: General Robert E. Lee and Civil War History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Richard B. McCaslin, *Lee in the Shadow of Washington* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001); Michael Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee* (New York: Random House, 2000); Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory*; Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *Lee, the Soldier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996); John M. Taylor, *Duty Faithfully Performed: Robert E. and His Critics* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's, 1999); Charles Bracen Flood, *Lee: The Last Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1981); Marshall William Fishwick, *Lee After the War* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1963); Clifford Dowdey, *Death of a Nation: The Story of Lee and His Men at Gettysburg* (New York: Knopf, 1963); Peter S. Carmichael, *Audacity Personified: The Generalship of Robert E. Lee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Gary W. Gallagher, *Lee & His Army in Confederate History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Collapse* (New York: Free Press, 2008); William Marvel, *Lee's Last Retreat: The Flight to Appomattox* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[20] See Hudson Strode, *Jefferson Davis*, 4 vols. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955-66); Clement Eaton, *Jefferson Davis* (New York: Free Press, 1977); Eric Langhein, *Jefferson Davis, Patriot; A Biography, 1808-1865* (New York: Vantage Press, 1962); Margaret Green, *President of the Confederacy: Jefferson Davis* (New York: J. Messner, 1963).

[21] Michael B. Ballard, *A Long Shadow: Jefferson Davis and the Final Days of the Confederacy* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986); Edward K. Eckert, *"Fiction Distorting Fact": The Prison Life, Annotated by Jefferson Davis* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987); William C. Davis, *Jefferson Davis: The Man and His Hour* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991); Donald E. Collins, *The Death and Resurrection of Jefferson Davis* (Latham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005); Felicity Allen, *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999); Cynthia Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial: The Treason Prosecution of Jefferson Davis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); William J. Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000); Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Jefferson Davis's Generals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

simply his brief tenure as Confederate president. William C. Davis' *Jefferson Davis: The Man and His Hour* (1991) acknowledges that Davis was a patriot and ardent constitutionalist before the Civil War, but he became one of the most notorious rebels when he accepted the position of Confederate president. However, he fails to include much analysis of Jefferson Davis' postwar life which is extremely disappointing and, frankly, unacceptable in understanding the broad nature and complexity of Davis. William J. Cooper's biography of Davis, *Jefferson Davis, American*, dedicates an ample amount of space to the analysis of Davis' capture, imprisonment, and postwar life. Cooper attributes Davis' true ascendancy to that of a martyr through his actions after his imprisonment. Felicity Allen's *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart* is also a quality analysis of Davis, particularly his postwar life. Although Allen discusses how literature and personal memoirs altered Davis' perception and memory, she does not devote as much time discussing how his feuds with his subordinates from the war affected his memory.

There are many books on these three individuals, but treating their memories together allows us to more deeply understand the evolution of the Lost Cause and the pro-southern narrative of the Civil War. White southerners looked to their former leadership during the postwar years in order to make sense of defeat. Jackson reminded them of their strength during the war due to his early victories against the Union. Lee and Davis renewed pride in the Confederacy and its ideals through their actions and words after the war ended. The Lost Cause did not begin only because of local and generalized remembrance for fallen soldiers and the cause. It was also greatly assisted by the actions of former Confederate leaders whom white southerners and their descendants could idolize as connections between their lives before the Civil War and their changed lives after defeat. As such, it is necessary to understand how leaders like Jackson, Lee, and Davis helped lay the foundations of and spread the ideals of the Lost

Cause in the postwar years. Because these individuals strove to establish the Confederate nation during the war, and worked to legitimize the legality of secession and the righteousness of the Confederate cause, white southerners placed their memories at the forefront of the Lost Cause movement. By eliminating slavery from the narrative of the war and subsequently perpetuating the notion that the war was caused by disagreements over states' rights, white southerners effectively altered the memories of the three individuals to make their remembrance less divisive. They were not traitors to the United States who fought to create a separate country, they were patriots who withstood the oppression of the federal government. Thus, it became easier to cement the legitimacy of the Lost Cause in the minds of the rest of the country.

Chapter One:

Soldier and Saint?: Stonewall Jackson and Southern Religiosity

Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson was both a brilliant military strategist and a religious icon to white southerners during the Civil War. Jackson's actions and leadership were crucial in securing numerous Confederate victories on the battlefield, and he quickly earned the respect of his men. He initially commanded the "Stonewall Brigade," a unit made up of a handful of Virginia infantry regiments from Rockbridge County and the Shenandoah Valley. He earned his nickname by holding against a Union counterattack at First Bull Run, or Manassas. This was the first of many battles in which Jackson played a deciding role. His success continued in the early years of the war as he rose through the ranks of the Army of Northern Virginia. His greatest triumphs occurred in the 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign and the May 1863 Battle of Chancellorsville, the latter of which ultimately cost him his life.

Jackson was killed by friendly fire after the Battle of Chancellorsville. Despite the victory, one could argue that the loss of Jackson negated any Confederate gains on the battlefield. As a result, the Confederacy never truly recovered from his death. Although many historians agree that victory in the war was unlikely, Jackson's presence on the battlefield gave the South its best chance at achieving independence. Thus, his death drastically affected both white southerners. Drawing much of their inner strength from their Christian faith, many came to believe that Jackson was the instrument of God that would emancipate his chosen people from

their Northern counterparts. However, his death in 1863 led some to question whether they were indeed God's chosen people.

His successes on the battlefield, extreme piety, and untimely death, propelled Jackson's memory in the southern remembrance movement, which saw the erection of numerous statues to him and other Confederate heroes. His bravery and heroism, particularly in the Shenandoah and at Chancellorsville, were most often the central themes of monument dedication speeches, newspaper articles, books, poems, and music largely after Reconstruction. This recollection of the deceased southern crusader served as an example of the righteousness of the Confederate cause.

Recent historiography tends to focus primarily on his military leadership and piety without engaging with his postwar memory. Some older biographies such as Frank E. Vandiver's *Mighty Stonewall* (1957) were quite useful in their time. Vandiver's research is thorough, setting the stage for the modern theme of Jackson primarily as a military commander. James I. Robertson's 1997 *Stonewall Jackson* remains the most well-researched and written narrative of Jackson's life. But, like many Stonewall biographies, it fails to consider the effects his life had on American culture after his death. While understandable as a biography, the study does a disservice to how his life affected others given his monumental importance to white southerners during the first half of the Civil War.

Since the 1870s and 1880s, Jackson was at the center of the "*what if?*" questions regarding the Confederacy. What if Jackson had survived Chancellorsville? What if he had joined Lee at Gettysburg? What if he survived until the end of the war? More recently, some historians such as Gary W. Gallagher, Bevin Alexander, and Ethan S. Rafuse have attempted to respond to the question. Most historians conclude that the presence of Jackson would not have

affected the outcome of the Civil War mostly because, as Rafuse maintains, "the larger forces at work were beyond his control."[22] Speaking specifically to the Gettysburg issue, Alexander argues that Jackson's presence would not have mattered because the battle would not have happened. As he contends, the greatest error at Gettysburg on the part of the Confederacy was fighting there in the first place, and Jackson, the "supreme strategist," would have voiced his opposition.[23] However, these speculations are purely military in nature. Logistics dominate Jackson historiography. Yes, he was a commander above all else when it came to his Civil War identity, but the amount of literature examining his piety is rather scant compared to his military exploits.

The Cult of Jackson: The Early Years of the Civil War and Confederate Nationalism

Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's popularity and strong memory within the South directly stemmed from a dichotomy of strong religious conviction, which sometimes bordered on fanaticism, and success in important battles during the first half of the Civil War. Furthermore, he exhibited certain eccentricities that made him interesting to the people of the South. Although it made him seem more unique in the 1800s, some modern scholars argue that it also made him more human.[24] But, this uniqueness worked in favor for Jackson's memory. By the time he died in May 1863, it was abundantly clear that there was no other officer to replace him. As Gallagher

[22] Ethan S. Rafuse, *Stonewall Jackson: A Biography* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011), 185. See also Gary W. Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 108-110, and Bevin Alexander, *Lost Victories: The Military Genius of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Holt, 1992), 328-329, 334-335.
[23] Alexander, *Lost Victories*, 330.
[24] See Wallace Hettle, *Inventing Stonewall Jackson: A Civil War Hero in History and Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 53-68 for lengthier discussion of Jackson's quirks and their literary interpretations throughout his historiography.

argues, “Soldiers and civilians alike often prefer that their heroes be somehow different from ordinary people.”[25]

During his life and thereafter, Jackson’s most remarked upon characteristic was his intense religiosity. This passionate faith seemingly grew over time. A West Point graduate, the young lieutenant fought with distinction in the Mexican War, then went on to find employment in 1851 as a professor at the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington. Three years later, his young wife Ellie died soon after having a still-born son. The devastating impact on Jackson his this loss is impossible to quantify, and seeking answers from heaven perhaps predictable. Had he done something to offend Providence? Jackson the devout became Jackson the fanatic. He soon joined the Presbyterian Church, and for the rest of his life religion and God’s will played an even more dominant role in his life. As one author wrote in 1866, Jackson “seemed to live, consciously, under the eye of God, and to shape all his actions with reference to the divine approval.”[26] His brother-in-law Confederate General Daniel Harvey Hill also commented, “I never knew of anyone whose reverence for Deity was so all pervading, and who felt so completely his entire dependence upon God.”[27]

Indeed, practically all of Jackson’s actions following his conversion were made based on his perception of God’s judgment and will. In a letter to his former sister-in-law, Margaret Junkin Preston, Jackson wrote,

> I have so fixed the habit in my own mind that I never raise a glass of water to my lips without a moment’s asking of God’s blessing. I never seal a letter without putting a word of prayer under the seal. I never take a letter from the post without a brief sending of my thoughts heavenward…The habit has become as fixed almost as breathing.[28]

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[25] Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory*, 114-115.
[26] John Esten Cooke, *Stonewall Jackson: A Military Biography, with a Portrait and Maps* (New York D. Appleton Company, 1866), 463.
[27] Daniel Harvey Hill letter, 1863, in James I; Robertson, Jr., “The Christian Soldier: General Thomas J. ‘Stonewall’ Jackson,” *History Today* 53, no. 2 (Feb. 2003): 29.
[28] Entire conversation recounted in Margaret Preston, “Personal Reminiscences of Stonewall Jackson,” *Century Magazine* 32 (1886): 935.

Jackson received praise for his critical role in turning the tide of First Manassas, but he declined the adulation. "Yesterday we fought a great battle, & gained a great victory, for which all the glory is due to God alone," Jackson wrote to his wife, Anna, "My preservation was entirely due, as was the glorious victory, to our God, to whom be all the glory, honor & praise."[29] Many historians have discussed the ideas of southerners identifying their independence movement as a religious crusade or Jackson's religiosity and his status as an instrument of God, but few have combined these factors to discuss the evolution of Jackson's memory after the Civil War. One of the few historians who has effectively tackled Jackson's postwar memory is Wallace Hettle in *Inventing Stonewall*.

As a professor of artillery at the Virginia Military Institute, Jackson earned a reputation for being highly eccentric and unusual, and he was unpopular with students.[30] Jackson had eye problems in 1848 and decided to remedy his difficulty by never reading by artificial light, even after dark, and committing to memory the next day's lesson for his class by sitting upright facing a wall for several hours repeating his lecture. Students were thus uninspired by his lectures, calling him "Tom Fool," with as many as 200 students urging his removal from teaching.[31] Although Jackson sometimes alienated and confused his students with his intense lecture tactics,

[29] Jackson to Mary Anna Jackson, July 22, 1861, Box 20, Dabney Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of Virginia.
[30] General Slaughter, a comrade of Jackson's in the United States army before the Civil War, recounted several of Jackson's eccentricities to a Raleigh newspaper in May 1864. According to Slaughter, Jackson was a "monomaniac" about his health, believing that one of his legs was getting shorter than the other, he only perspired on one side, and he needed to keep the arm and the leg of the other side in constant motion in order to preserve circulation. By far the strangest story stems from the night after the failed attack on Marye's Heights by the Army of the Potomac. Jackson argued that they should attack the Union immediately and, "in order to avoid the confusion and mistakes so common in a night attack, I recommend that we should strip ourselves perfectly naked!" In "About Stonewall Jackson," *The Mercury* (Raleigh, NC), May 11, 1864.
[31] James I. Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson: The Man, the Myth, the Soldier* (New York: Macmillan, 1997), 119-122.

and his soldiers occasionally joked about his strange quirks behind his back, the men he later led in battle adored and glorified him.

John N. Opie, who served with Jackson recounted that the men of the Army of Northern Virginia considered Jackson to be the "master spirit of the war," suggesting that he would be written about alongside Hannibal, Napoleon, and Frederick the Great.[32] Yankees acknowledged his prowess on the battlefield and lauded him while at the same time expressing jealousy and resentment that he fought for the Confederacy. Opie recounted that captured Union troops typically argued that if they were given Jackson, the Confederacy would have been "soon whipped."[33] On the other hand, Jackson marched and drilled his men mercilessly. As R. L. Dabney recounted, "Jackson's *great* fault is that he marches and works his men with such disregard of their physical endurance…With the rigidity of his character, I think him a *poor disciplinarian*."[34]

His soldiers were willing, however, to endure the pain of marching and drilling because he brought them victory. Needless to say, the men were distraught and uncertain of the future of the Confederacy upon Jackson's death. But his magnetism stemmed primarily from his animalistic aggressiveness on the battlefield and belief that the Confederacy was doing God's bidding in its quest for independence. These two factors combined with southerners' hopes for victory and their faith to turn Jackson into a household name and symbol of the cause in the first months of the war.

Success on the battlefield was nearly instantaneous for Jackson. As a result, his fame rose early in the war. Although religion played a vital role later in the war, his prowess was

[32] John N. Opie, *A Rebel Cavalryman with Lee, Stuart, and Jackson* (Chicago: W. B. Conkey Company, 1899), 140.
[33] Ibid., 140.
[34] Letter from Dabney to his wife, in Thomas Cary Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney* (Richmond: The Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1903), 265-266.

instrumental in creating the initial cult. He first earned acclaim throughout the South during the Battle of First Manassas in late July 1861. The first major engagement of the Civil War pitted green Union troops against a Confederate army comprised of many men who had only held a gun when hunting or shooting with friends and family. As a result, the few men with any military experience tended to be the officers leading them. Even then, for the older officers like Jackson and Lee, it was their first major engagement since the Mexican-American War more than a decade ago. For the younger officers, it was their first taste of combat.

Predictably, the battle was a stalemate for several hours even though many expected the Union forces to rout the rebels early on. However, the Yankees gained the upper hand until a brigade of Virginians under the command of a then-relatively unknown Jackson stood its ground against the Union assault. The action inspired the retreating Confederate troops to rally and send the Union army running to Washington. Jackson's stand earned him the sobriquet "Stonewall," which later became associated with the brigade at his insistence. During First Manassas, Jackson exhibited a gesture common to him; he continuously raised his left arm to the sky with his palm facing upwards. His soldiers interpreted this as a strange quirk or a prayer to God for success in battle. Either situation may have been the case, but both reasons became part of the popular memory of Jackson as a strange, yet deeply religious man.[35] He received praise for his role in securing victor and was credited with helping to turn the tide.[36] James I. Robertson, Jr. argues

[35] For summaries and analyses of Jackson's roles at First Manassas, the Shenandoah Valley, and the battles leading up to Chancellorsville, see Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson*; S. C. Gwynne, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2015); David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001); James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Alexander, *Lost Victories*; John H. Eicher and David J. Eicher, *Civil War High Commands* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Byron Farwell, *Stonewall: A Biography of General Thomas J. Jackson* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1993); Gary W. Gallagher, *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862 (Military Campaigns of the Civil War)* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); and Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

[36] *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. II, page 500.

that Jackson did not display any more heroism than other officers in his army, but he deserves credit for not panicking as did many others.[37] Within a couple weeks, newspapers began reprinting the tale of how Jackson received his nickname by "standing like a stone-wall" in the face of a charging enemy.[38]

As a result of his actions at First Manassas, Jackson was promoted to Major General and sent to the Shenandoah Valley, where he excelled against numerically superior Union forces in a relatively small window of time – March through July 1862. This further added to his celebrity in the South, as the rich farmland of the Shenandoah Valley was vital in feeding the Confederate military. If First Manassas was a glimpse at the potential of Jackson, then the Shenandoah Valley Campaign made him into a household name.[39] The *Richmond Whig* proclaimed, "Was there ever such a series of victories won by an inferior force by dauntless courage and consummate generalship?"[40] Confederate army nurse Kate Cummings wrote in her diary, "A star has arisen: his name [Stonewall], the haughty foe has found, to his cost, has been given prophetically, as he proved a wall of granite to them."[41] Jackson's star continued to rise, and more of the southern populace rallied behind his cunning and tactics.

Music and poetry were other popular mediums through which Jackson's memory stayed alive throughout the South. Numerous poems and songs were published in the weeks and months before and after his death. "Stonewall Jackson's Grand March" notably references Jackson's soldiers staying quiet and removing their caps when they saw him go off to pray out of deference for him. "Stonewall Jackson's Way" was the most popular, as it was written ten days after the

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[37] Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson*, 270.
[38] See "Gen. Bernard E. Bee," *The Raleigh Register*, August 3, 1861 and *South Western Baptist* (Marion, AL), August 8, 1861.
[39] See, for example, "The 'Stone-Wall,'" *Staunton Spectator* (Staunton, VA), March 18, 1862 and "The Latest from the Seat of War," *The Charleston Mercury*, September 5, 1862.
[40] *Richmond Whig*, June 6, 1862. Quoted in Gallagher, *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862*, xv.
[41] Quoted in Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862*, 507.

Battle of Antietam in September 1862. The poem referenced Jackson's military prowess, his sincere piety, and criticized any man who thought negatively of him. It closed by arguing that:

> The foe had better ne'er been born
> That gets in 'Stonewall's way.'[42]

The poem was first published in the Baltimore *Republican* after it fell out of the pocket of a dead soldier in the Stonewall Brigade. According to a newspaper article in 1870, the provost marshal of Baltimore seized and burned the sheet music when he found an early copy.[43] These songs and poems portrayed Jackson as a humble Christian man who also achieved great success on the battlefield promoted his positive image in the South.

Chancellorsville was Jackson's crowning achievement. In keeping with his daring attitude during the war, the key point of the battle was Jackson's flanking movement around the Union right. While this was a bold maneuver, it was hardly without precedent. Jackson frequently achieved military feats considered by many in the army to be impossible or, at the very least, improbable. His march at Chancellorsville contributed to what many historians consider Lee's masterpiece. While Lee deserves credit for the victory, it was Jackson who used a hidden road to flank the Union position and effectively rout the Eleventh Corps. His reverend, Tucker Lacy, knew the ground well, and pointed the road out to Jackson who quietly marched his men around the nearby Union position, visually shielded by heavy trees. Since the Eleventh Corps did not expect an attack, and Jackson so effectively used the trees as cover while keeping his men quiet, they drove towards Union commanding General Joseph Hooker's headquarters

[42] Francis Trevelyan Miller, ed., *The Photographic History of the Civil War*, 10 vols. (New York: The Review of Reviews), IX, 86-87.
[43] "A 'Rebel' Song – The Story of 'a Ballad that will Live as Long as the War is Remembered," *Fayetteville Observer* (Fayetteville, TN), May 19, 1870.

with relative ease.[44] Nightfall ended Jackson's pressure on the Union flank, and the attack was halted not long after it began. Despite the premature end of the assault, enough damage had been done to effectively cripple a large portion of the Army of the Potomac; Joseph Hooker was replaced by George Meade soon after the battle ended. The long, silent march exhausted Jackson's men, but the spectacle of fleeing Union troops both excited them and drained what little energy they had left.

Jackson, ever the aggressor, pressed forward the night of May 2 with a small detachment to inspect the new lines, when shots rang out. He had been riding in front of the left side of the Confederate line when rifle fire erupted on the right side. Fear gripped the Confederate soldiers, and the fire began to ripple down the line until it reached Jackson's group. He was hit three times: once in his right hand, another in his left wrist, and a third above his left elbow.[45] As a result of the wounds, Jackson's physician, Dr. Hunter McGuire, informed him that his left arm must be amputated. Jackson was completely serene upon hearing the news, believing that the loss of his arm was the will of God and that "all things worked together for good." Were he able, Jackson stated, he would have opted not to reattach his arm because God decreed it was to happen.[46] While reports circulated that Jackson would recover, he eventually succumbed to pneumonia and died on May 10, 1863.

Success on the battlefield had propelled Jackson to stardom, and his religiosity further endeared him to the public. Devout white southerners felt a strong connection to the man who

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[44] For more on the Battle of Chancellorsville, see Stephen W. Sears, *Chancellorsville* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996); Gary W. Gallagher, ed. *Chancellorsville: The Battle and Its Aftermath* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Daniel E. Sutherland, *Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville: The Dare Mark Campaign* (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

[45] For a more detailed analysis of the circumstances surrounding Jackson's wounding via friendly fire, see Robert K. Krick, "The Smoothbore Volley that Doomed the Confederacy," in *Chancellorsville: The Battle and Its Aftermath*, ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996) and Robert K. Krick, *The Smoothbore Volley That Doomed the Confederacy: The Death of Stonewall Jackson and Other Chapters on the Army of Northern Virginia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 1-41.

[46] "Letter from Ora," *Natchez Daily Courier*, May 28, 1863.

won on the battlefield and praised the Lord before and after the fighting. Furthermore, they believed his piety served as an example of the divine righteousness of their cause. Numerous stories regarding Jackson's benevolence as a kind, Christian man pervaded the South before and after his death. He prayed every morning and evening and occasionally went off into the woods to worship in solitude, a practice well-known throughout the army.[47] Veteran Randolph McKim later recounted that Jackson was "a man of prayer, and often while his soldiers slept, this devout soldier was pouring out his soul in supplication."[48]

The Confederate Bible Society, founded in 1862, sought to provide every Confederate soldier with his own miniature copy of the New Testament. Jackson reportedly kept a supply on hand to use as a reward for his men.[49] He insisted on having as many ministers and chaplains in the army as possible in order to maximize the faith of his men and thus enhance their effectiveness on the battlefield. Prior to the religious revival of the Army of Northern Virginia in early 1863, most regiments had no chaplains, so officers and enlisted men took it upon themselves to lead prayer or conduct Sunday Schools.[50] The religious revival was orchestrated by Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee, both of whom believed that too much sin in the army might prevent them from achieving victory. R. L. Dabney expressed concern that "pride and resentment, ambition and animosity" could prevent God from answering the prayers of the southern people.

By early 1863, Jackson was increasingly perturbed at the lack of chaplains within his command and the danger sin posed to their chances of victory, so when Rev. Lacy, a prominent

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[47] See George C. Rable, "Stonewall Jackson: The Christian Soldier in Life, Death, and Defeat," in *Lee and His Generals: Essays in Honor of T. Harry Williams* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012), 184.
[48] Randolph H. McKim, *A Soldier's Recollections; Leaves from the Diary of a Young Confederate, with an Oration on the Motives and Aims of the Soldiers of the South* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1910), 95.
[49] Drew Gilpin Faust, "Christian Soldiers: The Meaning of Revivalism in the Confederate Army," *The Journal of Southern History* 53, no. 1 (February 1987): 67.
[50] George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 70.

Virginia chaplain approached him offering his services, Jackson leapt at the opportunity. Jackson informed Lacy that the main enemy of the Confederate cause lay not to the north, but within "the sin of the army and people." When Lacy accepted the position, Jackson donated $200 and a horse to support his preaching. Lacy immediately aided Jackson in his quest for more army chaplains and penned a letter that was disseminated to the churches of Virginia. This letter argued that Virginia's churches needed to send more chaplains to the army for the benefit of the men by decree of "that sincere Christian…T. J. Jackson."[51] Jackson also regularly attended religious services conducted in a chapel constructed by his old Stonewall Brigade.[52]

Jackson prioritized religion in his command and the army. As George C. Rable argues, "Jackson hoped that his men would not only be good soldiers in the field but also good soldiers of the cross…"[53] His troops naturally gravitated to Jackson's association of faith in life with faith on the battlefield. Henry M. Field, who served under Jackson, recalled that Jackson had the army chaplains go from tent to tent, talking to the men about their homes and families, and the meetings always ended in prayer. During these events, passersby saw soldiers kneeling to pray, singing hymns.[54] He also made sure to send contributions back to fund the black Sunday school in Lexington he helped establish, as well as his own church.[55] Margaret Junkin Preston, described Jackson's idea of balance between Christianity and duty:

> To serve his country, to do God's will, to make as short work as possible of the fearful struggle, to be ready for death if at any moment it should come to him - these were the uppermost ideals of his mind, and he would put aside, with an impatient expression, the

[51] See Rev. Beverly Tucker Lacy, "An Address of the Chaplains of the Second Corps ("Stonewall" Jackson's), Army Northern Virginia, to the Churches of the Confederate States," *Southern Historical Society Papers*, vol. 14 (January-December 1886): 348-356.
[52] Rafuse, *Stonewall Jackson: A Biography*, 153; Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson*, xvi.
[53] Rable, "Stonewall Jackson: The Christian Soldier in Life, Death, and Defeat," 185.
[54] Henry M. Field, "Stonewall Jackson," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, vol. 83 (June 1, 1891): 917.
[55] As far back at the 1840s, Jackson was financially generous with other churches. When a Methodist church in the then fort town of Tampa was washed away in a hurricane, the call went out to raise money to build a new one. Among the contributors for the new church was Jackson, who donated $5. Hampton Dunn, "Stonewall Jackson gave $5 to Tampa church," (n.p., 196-?). University of South Florida Library.

> words of confidence and praise that would be lavished upon him. 'Give God the glory' would be his curt reply.[56]

After First Manassas, the citizens of Lexington, Jackson's adopted hometown, were excited to hear about the results of the battle. A crowd surrounded the post office when a letter from Jackson arrived. Believing the missive to be about the action at Manassas, the throng was surprised to hear that Jackson was simply sending his frequent contribution to the African American Sunday school, apologizing for the delay after "a fatiguing day's service."[57] White southerners eagerly accepted stories of Jackson's piety due to their own strong religious beliefs. His successes against often numerically superior Union forces combined to create a mythical interpretation that existed before and after his death.

He certainly helped foster this association, if unknowingly. Jackson frequently professed his belief that God was in charge of his actions, and thus his beliefs guided his every move. This also applied to the battlefield, as Jackson himself stated, "My religious belief teaches me to feel as safe in battle as in bed."[58] When asked about his daring exploits during the victory at Chancellorsville after he was wounded, Jackson replied,

> Most men will think that I planned it all from the first, but it was not so. I simply took advantage of circumstances as they presented themselves to me in the Providence of God. I feel that His hand led me.[59]

Such statements would understandably foster faith among the southern populace. Jackson's actions and words indicated that he was not in control. Rather, it was God using him almost as a puppet to do his bidding. And, that bidding was to secure southern independence. Others latched

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[56] Preston, "Personal Reminiscences of Stonewall Jackson," 935. In Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson,* xv.
[57] Rev. Moses D. Hoge, "Oration by Rev. Moses D. Hoge, D. D.," in "Orations at the Unveiling of the Statue of Stonewall Jackson, Richmond, Va., October 26th, 1875," *SHSP*, 13 (1885): 323. Found in Robertson, Jr., 271.
[58] John Millin Selby, *Stonewall Jackson as Military Commander* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1999), 25.
[59] William Swinton, "Gen. Lee and Stonewall Jackson," *The Charleston Daily News*, June 17, 1867.

on to this idea, as well. Following First Manassas, a South Carolina minister proclaimed, "It is God alone who has fought our battles."[60]

However, Jackson's insistence that God guided his actions and beliefs led to occasionally poor decisions. Stephen W. Sears argues that Jackson's devout religious nature led him to appoint many people unfit for military duty, including his future biographer, the Reverend Dabney. According to Sears, "it was said he preferred good Presbyterians to good soldiers."[61] Dabney was part of the religious revival of the Army of Northern Virginia, becoming Jackson's Chief of Staff, for a time. He also believed that no place should exist in his Sunday schedule for anything other than prayer – no fighting, marching, or reading the newspaper. Ironically, First Manassas, the battle that earned him his nickname, was fought on Sunday. These factors all combined in the form of the perfect Christian warrior that white southerners could follow towards their liberation.

Just as religion played a vital role in Jackson's life, so, too, did faith play a similar role in the establishment of Confederate nationalism and the Confederate identity. From the very beginning, white southerners considered religion to be a vital aspect of their quest for independence. The Confederate Constitution, which was adopted on February 8, 1861 and ratified on March 11, officially declared that the Confederate cause was ordained by God.[62] Furthermore, the motto of the CSA was *Deo vindice*, meaning "(With) God (as) our defender/protector." It appeared beneath the Seal of the Confederate States of America.[63] Anne Sarah Rubin and George C. Rable argue that the identity of the Confederacy was tied to an image

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[60] Quoted in Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples*, 75.
[61] Stephen W. Sears, "Onward, Christian Soldier," *New York Times*, March 16, 1997.
[62] Harry S. Stout, "Religion in the Civil War: The Southern Perspective," *National Humanities Center*, http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/cwsouth.htm.
[63] *Sigillologia. Being Some Account of the Great or Broad Seal of the Confederate States of America. A Monograph* (Washington, DC: Kervand & Towers, 1873), 4-5.

of themselves as God's chosen people. In this sense, the lines between secular and religious worlds blurred considerably during the Civil War, with Rubin claiming that "by injecting the Confederacy into matters of religion like the liturgy, Confederates added legitimacy to their national aspirations."[64] Harry S. Stout further argues that when Confederate lawmakers introduced God into their constitution, they solidified the South's identity as a Christian republic and offered a "surprisingly powerful critique of a 'godless' Northern Constitution."[65] To Confederates, the existence of God in their legal documents and the absence of God in northern documents proved that their cause was righteous even though they were the ones that injected religion into their cause.

This is exemplified in some of the pre-battle rituals performed by southern civilians and policies enacted by the Confederate government. Early in the war, Thomas R. R. Cobb introduced to the Congress a provision recognizing the Confederacy's dependence upon an "overruling Providence." The resolution also requested President Jefferson Davis designate a day of fasting and prayer. As battles raged throughout the Confederacy, southern civilians believed it was their duty to pray for victory and for the safety of those serving in the military. Following First Manassas, reports surfaced of a Georgia infantry company that had not lost a single man because their friends and family back home were praying for their safety.

As a result, First Manassas and future battles took on additional religious connotations as they truly instilled in white southerners that secession and the subsequent fight for independence was the decree of God and that victory was not only possible, but preordained.[66] As Stout wrote, "Each victory would be interpreted as God's work, a gracious favor just short of the miraculous

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[64] Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 42.
[65] Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the American Civil War* (New York: Viking, 2006), 42.
[66] Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples*, 72.

that signified a triumph of divine justice."[67] Coincidentally, this battle served as the figurative birth of "Stonewall" Jackson and convinced white southerners that God was on their side. From that point on, Jackson had mixed success on the battlefield, but as Gallagher claimed, he underachieved when the stakes were somewhat low, and he excelled in crucial situations. As a result, his occasional blunders were not often felt by the Confederacy, while his key contributions in victories were heralded. And, these proclamations were often religious in nature, as southern civilians lauded Jackson as an instrument of God and testament to their selection as His chosen people. When Jackson, and the Confederacy, achieved victory, it was both provided by and ordained by God.

Jackson's military successes were often featured in southern newspaper headlines and fell in line with the belief that God was guiding the southern cause of independence. As a result, Jackson became more strongly associated as being a weapon of God, particularly related to his ultra-piety, which some historians consider to be more akin to the Old Testament due to his wrathful nature.[68] Even Jackson himself believed that the war was a religious crusade, and that he viewed himself "as an Old Testament warrior – like David or Joshua – who went into battle to slay the Philistines."[69] Some southerners likened Jackson to Oliver Cromwell, the general who also experienced a religious awakening that drove his military ambition during the English Civil War.[70]

Some also questioned the combination of Jackson's wrath upon the Yankee military and his Presbyterian faith. Biographer Sarah L. Jones found difficulty accepting "what appears to be

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[67] Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation*, 52.
[68] See Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 51-52, and Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples*, 73-76
[69] James I. Robertson, Jr. interview, in David White, "Stonewall Jackson Biographer Says Religion Drove Civil War General," *The Charleston Gazette*, April 12, 2013.
[70] For a lengthier analysis of the Cromwell comparison, see Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples*, 137-138 and Rable, "Stonewall Jackson: The Christian Soldier in Life, Death, and Defeat," 185.

the bloodthirsty spirit of a savage, with the gentle character and religious devotion of a man like Jackson." Other civilians argued that the idea of the "Christian soldier" could not exist because the duty of a soldier is kill. As Mary Chesnut wrote in her diary, "There cannot be a Christian soldier. Kill or be killed, that is their trade, or they are a failure."[71] These Old Testament references also served ministers and preachers who helped radicalize white southerners into acting as vengeful toward the North as God had wrought destruction upon nonbelievers.[72] This somewhat radical approach was indeed effective as white southerners increasingly supported the religiosity of the Confederate cause and its leaders, especially Jackson.

However, the adoration of Jackson bordered on idolatry, and southern clergy worried that this might anger God. Even foreign visitors noticed this extremism. During his visit on behalf of Queen Victoria, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Fremantle noted, "Jackson is considered a regular demigod in this country."[73] Some southern civilians feared the consequences of the reverence of Jackson and other generals. One expressed fear that "people [are] in danger of worshipping Gen. Jackson instead of God, who rules over all. If we idolize him, he will be taken from us."[74] Another summarized this fear in great detail:

> One of the greatest heroes of the war has been called from us by an all-wise Providence, no doubt as a punishment for our ascribing to a mere man praises due to God for giving to us Jackson with the virtues and talents he possessed. May it be a warning to us in the future, to remember that every man is what he is, only through the power and will of God; and that if we have successful and apparently great generals defending our cause, the honor and praise are due to God, and not to the mere men who are thus blessed.[75]

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[71] Sarah L. Jones, *"Stonewall" Jackson, Late General of the Confederate States Army* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1863). To clarify, Sarah L. Jones was the pen-name of British author Catherine Cooper Hopley. She wrote several books on the Civil War, as well as a few others about the United States. Mary Chesnut, *Mary Chesnut's Civil War*, 501-502. For a lengthier analysis of white southerners who argued against Jackson's persona as a Christian soldier, see Hettle, *Inventing Stonewall Jackson*, 19-21.
[72] See Rable, 73-76.
[73] Sir Arthur James Lyon Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States: April, June 1863* (Mobile: S. H. Goetzel), 114.
[74] Martha White Read to Thomas Griffin Read, June 19-21, 1862, in Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples*, 138.
[75] Diary of Milton Wylie Humphreys, May 12-13, 1863, Humphreys Papers, University of Virginia Special Collections.

This expressive devotion eventually became a prominent theme in sermons following Jackson's death, as ministers damned white southerners for glorifying their generals and subsequently ignoring God, who led them.[76]

An officer in the Army of Northern Virginia, in an article for the *Southern Literary Messenger*, wrote that Jackson was "the idol of the people, and is the object of greater enthusiasm than any other military chieftain of our day."[77] At the same time, a majority of southerners accepted this dichotomy. As Charles Reagan Wilson argues, "Jackson was a puritan at heart, and while the romantic South loved the cavalier, the moralistic South could identify with the puritan."[78] Thus, most southern civilians willingly ignored the negative aspects of Jackson's nature in order to preserve their societal code.

Bevin Alexander argues that Lee, rather than Jackson, was the "living symbol" of the Confederate cause.[79] Perhaps this was true amongst the officers surrounding Lee, but many southern civilians and common Confederate soldiers gravitated toward Jackson because of his success in aggressively attacking the so-called God-less Yankees. As Robertson puts it, Confederate soldiers, especially in the Stonewall Brigade, expressed a profound love for Lee, but Jackson was the one that made them into soldiers and earned them a reputation as an elite unit within the army.[80] Alexander's point is valid. While Lee was considered the living symbol of the Confederate cause, Jackson was the warrior that was supposed to deliver victory. Prior to Jackson's death, the two essentially shared the moniker, and Jackson was largely seen as the

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[76] See Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples*, 77.
[77] Edward Porter Alexander, "Confederate Chieftain," *Southern Literary Messenger*, 36.
[78] Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 52.
[79] Alexander, *Lost Victories*, 334. Hettle clarifies that Jackson's reputation eclipsed that of Lee's after Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign. He argues that they shared the adoration of the South, but popular acclaim indicates that Jackson initially received much of the attention in newspapers, prints, songs, and serials, which led to a demand for books about
Jackson. See Hettle, *Inventing Stonewall*, 41.
[80] Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson*, 424.

instigator of Confederate success, at least on the Confederate home front. One can largely see the effects of Jackson's death on southern civilians in their attempts to find another officer in whom to place their faith. As Sallie Armstrong Turner pleaded in her diary, "God in mercy, save us Gen. R. E. Lee."[81]

"Who can fill his place!": Death, Mourning, and the Future of the Confederacy[82]

Jackson was wounded by friendly fire at Chancellorsville, and his left arm was amputated as a precaution. His death 10 days later resulted from the pneumonia he contracted likely due to his weakened immune system. As word of his injury reached the southern populace, people were understandably shaken. They were, however, hopeful for his recovery and were temporarily placated by the victory at Chancellorsville. Thus, if Jackson were out of action while he recovered, it would not matter nearly as much since the Army of Northern Virginia had just dealt the Union a resounding defeat. Once Jackson contracted pneumonia, it became clear that his situation was increasingly hopeless. When Reverend Lacy informed General Lee that it was not believed Jackson would recover, Lee responded by saying, "Surely General Jackson must recover…God will not take him from us, now that we need him so much. Surely he will be spared to us, in answer to the many prayers which are offered for him."[83] Lee's words reflect the attitude of the South the previous two years: if we pray hard enough, God will certainly deliver

[81] Diary of Sallie Armstrong Turner, "May 11, 1863," Loose-leaf pages, Virginia Historical Society.
[82] Exclaimed by General Richard B. Garnett upon seeing Jackson's corpse in Richmond. Garnett was court-martialed by Jackson who accused him of disobeying orders during the Shenandoah Valley campaign when Garnett retreated from an indefensible position without Jackson's permission. It is certainly possible that the involvement of Jackson's old command, the Stonewall Brigade, contributed to Jackson's fury regarding the retreat. Although Garnett held a grudge against Jackson until he was killed on the third day at Gettysburg, he assured Henry Kyd Douglas and staff-officer Sandie Pendleton that "no one can lament his death more sincerely than I do. I believe he did me great injustice, but I believe also he acted from the purest motives." Quotations found in Henry Kyd Douglas, *I Rode with Stonewall, Being Chiefly the War Experiences of the Youngest Member of Jackson's Staff from the John Brown Raid to the Hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1940), 38.
[83] Quoted in Rafuse, *Stonewall Jackson*, 180.

on the promise of independence. Jackson's wounding and subsequent illness and death did not fit into the typical trend of pray and receive victory that the Army of Northern Virginia enjoyed during the first half of the war. As a result, many civilians did not know how to cope with the break in this trend.

Following Jackson's death at Chancellorsville, many civilians throughout the south sought refuge in their religiosity, looking to ministers for guidance and reassurance. Ministers and preachers earlier emphasized that the religious services and prayers conducted by them shared a common ideological message: southerners were a godly people, figures such as Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson exemplified this godliness, and God looked upon them with favor. But after his death, ministers changed their tone and chastised their worshippers for their unholy veneration of Jackson. White southerners continued to associate the Confederacy with godliness, but they questioned the possibility of winning the war and thus looked to their religious leaders for reassurance that they were still God's chosen people.

The mere presence of Jackson on the battlefield gave white southerners a feeling of confidence during the first half of the Civil War. He was one of the most brilliant generals on either side, and the Confederacy's early victories, as well as Jackson's central role in the key battles, led them to believe that God was on their side. That changed for many after Jackson's demise. The reaction to Jackson's death was widespread sorrow among white southerners, but how they perceived the future of the war varied. Jackson's sister argued that he was better off dead than to have a continued role in the leadership of the rebellion.[84] On the other hand, Private

[84] *The Christian Recorder*, January 23, 1864.

Robert A. Moore of the 17th Mississippi Regiment wrote "No words can describe the sorrow with which [his death] will be received from the Potomac to the Rio Grande."[85]

Overcome with grief, the entire Stonewall Brigade requested a furlough in order to attend the funeral and act as a guard and pallbearers. Though he understood, Robert E. Lee was forced to deny the request out of fear that the Union army under Joseph Hooker may strike back at any time after the defeat at Chancellorsville. This denial created perhaps the only animosity towards Lee the Stonewall Brigade ever felt, according to Robertson. Lee, however, wholeheartedly granted the brigade's next request: having the unit officially named the "Stonewall Brigade." Until this point, that had only been a nickname, not unlike Jackson's moniker. The Confederate War Department approved the name-change on May 30, 1863, and the Stonewall Brigade became and remained the only unit with an official nickname.[86] The members of the Stonewall Brigade also unknowingly set a precedent for future memorialization when they donated $5,688 to Jackson's staff officer Lieutenant Henry Kyd Douglas to be used for the erection of a monument in honor of their departed chieftain.[87]

Jackson's funeral was one of great fanfare as thousands turned out along the route to view his body as it traveled to Richmond. Flowers were placed upon the coffin as it passed through towns. Many prominent Confederates attended, including President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet, generals Longstreet, Ewell, Pickett, Garnett, and James Kemper.[88] Longstreet later recalled that the officers left the funeral to "face a future bereft of much of its hopefulness."[89] The new Confederate national flag, recently commissioned by the Congress to replace the "Stars

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[85] Pvt. Robert A. Moore, *A Life for the Confederacy: As Recorded in the Pocket Diaries of Pvt. Robert A. Moore*, ed. James W. Silver (Jackson, TN: McCowat-Mercer Press, Inc., 1959), 146.
[86] James I. Robertson, Jr., "The Right Arm of Lee and Jackson," *Civil War History*, vol. 3, no. 4 (Dec. 1957): 431.
[87] See Douglas, *I Rode With Stonewall*, 239.
[88] Ibid., 229.
[89] James Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox; Memoirs of the Civil War in America* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1896), 332.

and Bars," was draped over Jackson's coffin before it flew in the Confederate capital by orders of Davis. The president, at one time distrustful of Jackson, wrote that his death was "a great national calamity."[90] After his body was paraded through the streets, it was transported from the Governor's house to the Capitol and lay in state for civilians to view the coffin. Upwards of 20,000 people, according to one newspaper account, pushed their way into the building to view their beloved general. One Confederate officer who visited with his son later wrote that the crowd "nearly crushed us."[91] Seeing the coffin confirmed the grim reality of the South's chances in the war.

"No such homage was ever paid to an American," Dabney wrote of the funeral occurrences.[92] Although he may have been biased towards his friend and former commanding officer, Dabney nevertheless made a valid point. Massive crowds gathered to see Jackson's body transported to Richmond and observed him lying in state. Margaret Preston Junkin argued that "sincerer mourning was never manifested for any one."[93] The scene was difficult for some to bear, but those who paid their respects to Jackson did so because they believed he had done so much for them. As the doors of the Capitol closed, a veteran ran up to the entrance and tearfully demanded to be let in. He pointed to his amputated arm and cried, "By this arm which I lost for my country, I demand the privilege of seeing my General once more!" Governor Letcher, who had been standing nearby, heard the commotion and let him enter.[94]

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[90] Gwynne, *Rebel Yell*, 553-554; Davis quotation found in Davis to Lee, May 11, 1863, *OR*, Series 1, vol. 25, pt. 2.
[91] Josiah Gorgas, *The Journals of Josiah Gorgas, 1857-1878*, ed. Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995), 66. Estimate of 20,000 attendees from "The Remains of Gen. Jackson," *The Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC), May 20, 1863.
[92] R. L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lieut.-Gen. Thomas J. Jackson (Stonewall Jackson)* (Philadelphia: Blelock & Co., 1866), 731.
[93] Elizabeth Preston Allan, *The Life and Letters of Margaret Junkin Preston* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1903), 166.
[94] This incident recounted in Mary Anna Jackson, *Memoirs of Stonewall Jackson*, 461 and Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lieut.-Gen. Thomas J. Stonewall Jackson*, 731.

S. C. Gwynne argues that the outpouring of grief in the South for Jackson was notably unique in American history. Never before had a leader expired at such a crucial juncture. George Washington died 18 years after the establishment of the new United States, and other statesmen like Benjamin Franklin had made their notable contributions years or even decades prior to their deaths. But Jackson fell at Chancellorsville, the pinnacle of his quest to liberate the South from northern rule. Drew Gilpin Faust called Abraham Lincoln's funeral "the national funeral," and Gwynne argues that Jackson's was the Confederate version.[95]

Despite feeling sorrowful, white southerners attempted to find positivity in Jackson's death. Some attempted to find light-heartedness in a time of great tragedy. A story, the veracity of which cannot be determined, sprouted from Baltimore that emphasized Jackson's death as part of God's plan for the Confederacy. In this tale, a patient at an asylum near the city was walking around the lawn when someone informed him of Jackson's fate. His face was initially sullen and grief-stricken, but he suddenly lifted his head and exclaimed towards the sky, "Oh, what a battle must have been raging in Heaven, when the Archangel of the Lord needed the services of Stonewall Jackson!"[96] Perhaps God would send them another Jackson to replace the one they had just lost.[97] They prayed for another Jackson, not simply another general that would help them win the war. Even Robert E. Lee tried to be positive while dealing with overwhelming grief over the loss of his friend and talented subordinate. Lee reportedly openly wept in front of General-Reverend William N. Pendleton. After accepting that Jackson was gone, Lee sought solace in his own piety, believing that God would "raise up someone in his place."[98]

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[95] Gwynne, *Rebel Yell*, 556.
[96] Douglas, *I Rode with Stonewall*, 230-31.
[97] See Charles Royster, *The Destructive War*, 288 and S. C. Gwynne, *Rebel Yell*, 40. James H. Lane later recalled that "on many a subsequent hard fought field I have heard them exclaim: 'Oh! For another Jackson.'" In James H. Lane Reminiscences, Box 3, Folder 108a, Auburn University Archives.
[98] R. E. Lee to Mrs. Lee, May 11, 1863, in Robert E. Lee, Jr., ed., *Recollections and Letters of General Robert E. Lee* (Garden City, NJ: Garden City Publishing, 1924), 94. Lee and Jackson had an amicable and productive working

However, skeptics did exist. Wesley Lewis Battle of the 37th North Carolina wrote, "I don't think his place can ever be filled."[99] Although they had talented generals in Lee, Longstreet, and others, none embodied all of the qualities that endeared Jackson to white southerners. His fiery tenacity and strict piety meshed perfectly with their own passion for a God-delivered independent nation. As such, Revered James B. Ramsey argued that "the spirit of Jackson, in our rulers, our military leaders, and our people can alone save us and perpetuate us as a nation."[100] Since Jackson was gone, Ramsey urged the people to emulate his determination in his crusade for independence and his profound dedication to God. Only then could white southerners band together and overcome the loss of their hero.

Soldiers were particularly grim in their outlook on the future of the Confederacy. Many of the soldiers alongside him believed that the cause was lost when they heard Jackson died.[101] John N. Opie, who served with Jackson, felt that Jackson's death was "the harbinger of the downfall of the Confederacy. When he fell, the Almighty proclaimed the indestructability of the American Union."[102] Likewise former colonel Wayland Fuller Dunaway proclaimed, "Alas! As when Hector fell the doom of Troy was sealed, so with the death of Jackson the star of the Southern Confederacy declined."[103] Another penned in diary that it was the worst news he had heard since he had joined the army.[104] Some of Jackson's former comrades feared that the end of the Confederacy drew near with his death. General Daniel Harvey Hill wrote to North Carolina

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relationship. Confederate Secretary of State Judah Benjamin allegedly proclaimed that Jackson held a "childlike reverence" for Lee. Quotation found in Arthur Fremantle, *The Fremantle Diary: Being the Journal of Lieutenant Colonel James Arthur Lyon Fremantle, Coldstream Guards, on his Three Months in the Southern States* (London: A. Deutsch, 1956), 167.

[99] Wesley Lewis Battle to his father, May 16, 1863, Battle Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

[100] James B. Ramsey, *True Eminence Founded on Holiness: A Discourse Occasioned by the Death of Lieut. Gen. T. J. Jackson* (Lynchburg, VA, 1863), 20.

[101] Opie, *Rebel Cavalryman*, 138.

[102] Ibid., 144.

[103] Wayland Fuller Dunaway, *Reminiscences of a Rebel* (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1913), 69.

[104] Unnamed soldier diary entry, May 11, 1863. Virginia Historical Society.

Governor Zebulon Vance that "We have lost our greatest leader. May God help us. There is none to take his place."[105] Jed Hotchkiss, renowned cartographer of the Army of Northern Virginia, recounted that "nearly all regarded [Jackson's death] as the beginning of the end."[106] The Virginia Military Institute was also profoundly affected by Jackson's death. Despite his past reputation as odd and a poor professor, he was still a son of VMI, and the administration and students responded by wearing customary outward badges of mourning.[107]

Jackson's death helped create and sustain his memory as a martyr to the Confederate cause. Gary W. Gallagher argues that because Jackson died after such a crucial victory in which he played an integral role, his final moments as the hero of the battle were frozen in time. Indeed, in his memoir, Richard Taylor argued that Jackson "was fortunate in his death, he fell at the summit of glory, before the sun of the Confederacy had set."[108] Some civilians after the battle could look to that moment as a key sacrifice to win the war. Others saw his death as a critical blow from which they could and would not recover. Elizabeth Preston Allan recalled that moment was the first time it dawned on her that God could let the Confederacy be defeated. Another woman wrote, "We were…a clan bereft of its chieftain; a country in peril."[109]

Plenty of white civilians adopted a melancholy attitude, believing it to be the potential death-knell of the South. For some, the defeat at Gettysburg two months later signaled the true decline of the Confederacy.[110] The Richmond *Enquirer* argued that the void was greater than if

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[105] Jeffrey D. Wert, "I Am So Unlike Other Folks," *Civil War Times*, vol. 28, no. 2 (April 1989): 20.
[106] Quoted in Royster, *The Destructive War*, 227.
[107] Charles D. Walker, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates and Eleves of the Virginia Military Institute Who Fell During the War Between the States* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1875), 57.
[108] Richard Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879), 92.
[109] Elizabeth Randolph (Preston) Allan, *A March Past: Reminiscences of Elizabeth Randolph Preston Allan*, ed. Janet Allen Bryan (Richmond, VA: The Dietz Press, 1938), 152. The latter quotation found in Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson*, 755.
[110] Allan, *A March Past*, 151.

one of their armies lost an entire division (upwards of 8,000 soldiers).[111] Lucy Rebecca Buck lamented that "nature seemed even to partake in the general gloom, for the sun although shining in a cloudless sky seemed sickly and wan." Janet Allan Bryan stated "it was the first time it had dawned on us that God could let us be defeated."[112]

These entries demonstrated the feelings of despair that enveloped many white southerners in the weeks after Chancellorsville. Mary Jones of Georgia confided to her son, "the death of our pious, brave, and noble General Stonewall Jackson is a great blow to our cause! May God raise up friends and helpers to our bleeding country!" North Carolina diarist Catherine Anne Devereux Edmonston declared that she "had no heart to write more, tho [*sic*] the paper is full of news [of his death]." She also "care[d] for nothing but him…He was the nation's idol…"[113] Emma LeConte asserted that her family never dreamed Jackson could ever die.[114]

A considerable shift in white southern mentality regarding the possibility of victory quickly occurred. Chancellorsville was the greatest and most complete triumph of the war if one does not consider Jackson's death as an equalizing factor. At this point, in an immediate sense, the Confederacy was at its closest to achieving victory, except perhaps prior to the third day at Gettysburg. Thus, it is understandable to believe that most, if not all, Confederates subscribed to the idea that Jackson's death may have been the necessary tribute to God in exchange for

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[111] "The Northern Press on the Death of Stonewall Jackson," *Weekly Raleigh Register*, May 27, 1863. The article is about Northern sentiments towards the death of Jackson, but the quotation from the *Enquirer* was reprinted by the New York *Herald*, which was referenced in the *Register* article. This was a common staple of nineteenth century press coverage. Many articles, including ones in the proceeding chapters, were compilations of articles taken from other newspapers.

[112] Buck, 200; Allan, 152.

[113] Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston, *"Journal of a Sesech Lady": The Diary of Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston*, ed. Beth Gilbert Crabtree and James W. Patton (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1979), 392 (entry for May 11, 1863).

[114] Emma LeConte, *When the World Ended: The Diary of Emma LeConte*, ed. Earl Schneck Miers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 96.

southern independence.[115] As such, the negativity surrounding many of these white southern accounts is intriguing and indicative of the fragility of white southern morale during the war.

Northern newspapers also lamented the loss of Jackson, if mostly for his personality. They were respectful of Jackson, oftentimes arguing that although he fought for the Confederacy, he was primarily a military man and not responsible for the secession of the southern states. Regarded by many as being brilliant tactician, there was a general sense of respectful relief that he was no longer commanding southern troops. The Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle* claimed that "while we are only too glad to be rid…of so terrible a foe, our sense of relief is not unmingled with emotions of sorrow and sympathy at the death of so brave a man." Jackson was imbued with "heroism…bravery…sublime devotion…[and] purity of character," and he was not the first instance of "a good man devoting himself to a bad cause."[116] The New York *Independent* also highlighted his piety as a reason to honor Jackson, arguing that he was "no longer a foe…[but] a noble-minded gentleman, a rare and eminent Christian!"[117] Many subsequent newspaper articles referred to Jackson as the most brilliant general of the war. However, this honor was possibly bestowed upon Jackson because he was killed and thus became a martyr in southern newspapers, while northern newspapers treated it as a posthumous badge of honor.

In the wake of Jackson's death, some writers tried to portray Jackson in a more positive light. This was likely due to his role as a soldier and not a political leader of the South who advocated for secession. "Barbara Frietchie," a poem published by Northern abolitionist John

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[115] Cornelia Peake McDonald proclaimed that white southerners "ought to feel willing to give him back to Him who gave him, and who has taken him to Himself. His mission was no doubt accomplished, but it was a bitter day for the South when he left us." In Cornelia Peake McDonald, *A Woman's Civil War: A Diary, with Reminiscences of the War, from March 1862*, ed. Minrose C. Gwin (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 149-50.
[116] Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, May 13, 1863. See also "Reported Death of General Stonewall Jackson," *Alexandria Gazette*, May 13, 1863.
[117] New York *Independent*, May 11, 1863; republished in *Christian Recorder*, May 23, 1863.

Greenleaf Whittier in 1864, described the patriotic actions of Barbara Frietchie (sometimes "Fritchie") during the September 1862 Confederate occupation of Frederick, Maryland and represents the mythologized image of Jackson just a year after his death. According to the poem and tales surrounding the incident, Frietchie, then at least ninety years old, appeared on her balcony as Confederate troops marched past. There, she proudly and defiantly waved the Union flag at the invaders, prompting the enraged Confederate soldiers to fire on the flag which splintered the staff. She grabbed the shattered staff and tattered flag, calling out, "Shoot, if you must, this old grey head, But [sic] spare your country's flag." Stonewall Jackson, who happened to be leading that particular column, shouted at his men that "Who touches a hair of yon grey head Dies [sic] like a dog! March on!"[118]

Though news of Jackson's death spread quickly throughout the South, some hoped the rumors were not true and chose not to believe the reports unless they saw them in print. Even then, skeptics concocted that it was a Yankee plot to curb southern morale in the face of the Union defeat at Chancellorsville.[119] This train of thought never seriously materialized, and southern civilians wondered how they should proceed without Jackson. Many sought solace in their parishes and faith. Preachers and ministers argued that instead of questioning God's decision to take Jackson from them, Southerners should be grateful and hopeful that the Confederacy was blessed with such a "perfect Christian Hero." Some religious figures reassured that God would not have blessed them with Jackson for two years of war if He did not have plans for their "glorious deliverance." Besides, Jackson's successes should be a result of his deep and

[118] Dall, Caroline Wells Healey, *Barbara Fritchie, a study* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1892), 74.
[119] McDonald, 146-47; Lucy Rebecca Buck, *Shadows on My Heart: The Civil War Diary of Lucy Rebecca Buck of Virginia*, ed. Elizabeth R. Baer (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 200-201.

abiding faith. Accordingly, southern people should follow in that regard if they are to earn God's rewards.[120]

Jackson was widely eulogized as a martyr to the Confederate cause. However, this idea was rather new to the people of the South. Wallace Hettle explains that early in the war, depictions of martyrdom were extremely rare as it was believed that men in the southern armies served God, not the Confederacy. In 1861, Dabney broached the idea in one of his sermons, "Our Comfort in Dying." Dabney was the only minister at that time to engineer a theological argument that Confederate soldiers could be Christian martyrs as opposed to secular martyrs such as Nathan Hale.[121] This sermon served as a foundation upon which Dabney and other ministers could inject more religion into the cause. Jackson and all the men who fell before him were simply necessary sacrifices for the greater good. Dabney's later sermons reinterpreted this sentiment slightly by arguing for Jackson's "daily martyrdom" in his self-sacrifice for the cause, rather than his singular sacrifice.[122] Dabney doubled-down on reinforcing Jackson's piety during his eulogy/sermon, *True Courage*, in which he compared Jackson's quirk of holding his uplifted hand, first exhibited at First Manassas, as a form of praying akin to Moses "whose uplifted hands coincided with Israel's victory the Amalekites in Exodus 17:11."[123]

At the same time, other ministers viewed his death as a fulfilled prophecy that they warned about. They rebuked their followers for a lack of faith, arguing that God did not take

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[120] Ramsey, *True Eminence*, 9, 18, 19. See also George William White, "On the Death of Stonewall Jackson," sermon delivered in May 1863, George William White Collection, Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, NC.

[121] See Wallace Hettle, "The Minister, the Martyr, and the Maxim: Robert Lewis Dabney and Stonewall Jackson Biography," *Civil War History*, vol. 49, no. 4 (Dec. 2003): 354. Hettle has produced several publications relating to Jackson's memory and Robert Lewis Dabney. See also *Inventing Stonewall Jackson*. For Dabney's sermon, see "Our Comfort in Dying," (1861).

[122] Hettle, "The Minister, the Martyr, and the Maxim," 364.

[123] R. L. Dabney, *True Courage: A Discourse Commemorative of Lieut. General Thomas J. Jackson* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication of the Confederate States, 1863), 15. For an excellent analysis of Dabney's speech from the theological and rhetorical standpoint, see Lawrence C. Trotter, "A Triple Defense: Robert Lewis Dabney on 'Stonewall' Jackson," *Journal of Communication & Religion*, vol. 27, no. 2 (November 2004): 268-294.

Jackson away because they are not worthy of deliverance. Instead, God used this act to condemn them of idolatry in the ways they praised Jackson as larger than life.[124] Some southerners feared that retribution had taken Jackson from them. Margaret Junkin Preston wrote in her diary on May 12: "How fearful the loss to the Confederacy! The people made an idol of him, and God has rebuked them…Who thinks or speaks of victory? The word is scarcely ever heard. Alas! Alas! When is the end to be?"[125]

In a sermon delivered in response to Jackson's death, Dabney chastised white southerners and asked rhetorically if God had found the South unworthy and had taken Jackson away to spare him the pain of seeing the Confederacy defeated as punishment for their sins.[126] According to multiple ministers, white southerners were being punished due to their lack of piety. Ramsey argued Jackson's love of God was the source of his fame and gave him "a concentration of energy otherwise impossible."[127] Likewise, Tucker Lacy believed "that a man was a better Genl or merchant or farmer or anything else for being a Christian."[128] Dabney cautioned that "while man is mortal, the cause is immortal," and God should be the true deliverer of Confederate independence.[129] White southerners focused too much on praising Jackson rather than praising God for giving them Jackson. As a result, God felt it necessary to take Jackson from them to teach the Confederacy a lesson. Dabney's logic aligns with Stout's argument that "God was purifying His people through fires of adversity so that they would come to depend only on

[124] See Royster, *The Destructive War*, 288.
[125] Allan, ed., *The Life and Letters of Margaret Junkin Preston*, 165.
[126] Dabney, *True Courage*, 22.
[127] Ramsey, *True Eminence*, 12.
[128] Quoted in Royster, *The Destructive War*, 226.
[129] Dabney, *True Courage*, 22-23. For the personal turmoil that overwhelmed Dabney with Confederate defeat, see Charles Reagan Wilson, "Robert Lewis Dabney: Religion and the Southern Holocaust," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 89 (January 1981): 79-89.

Him."[130] The southern people praised the general too much while not giving enough thanks to God. Here was a lesson to avoid idolatry of mortals.

Jackson's death forced many southerners to pause and consider whether God might grant them victory in their self-described crusade. Even when the war was ending two years later, southern religious figures repeated this process, assuring the faithful that even though the war on the battlefield was over, God had not deserted them completely. Rather than see God abandoning them, they saw it as a divine chastening which inspired them to reconstruct their religious lives in the form of the Lost Cause.[131] By the 1880s, some white southerners accepted that God taking Jackson was part of His plan for them. At the unveiling of the monument to Jackson in New Orleans in 1881, one speaker professed: "When in Thy inscrutable wisdom, Oh Lord, Thou didst ordain that the Confederacy should fall, then didst find it necessary to remove Thy servant Stonewall Jackson, Amen."[132]

White southerners dwelled upon the loss of Jackson for the rest of the war. In the decades that followed, they wondered what might have happened if he had lived. Despite Jackson's own disclosure to Dabney that he did not expect to live to see the end of the war, nor would he have wanted to if victory was not assured, southerners constantly pondered the possibilities of "*what if*?" What if Jackson had been alive for the Battle of Gettysburg, which ended in Confederate defeat partially due to a lack of aggression on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia was arguably the most prominent scenario debated after the war. This idea dominated the southern literary world in the 1870s and onward in memoirs, newspaper articles, and contributions to the

[130] Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation*, 52.
[131] Daniel W. Stowell, *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1863-1877* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 5-6.
[132] Found in *Dedication of Tomb of Army of Northern Virginia, Louisiana Division, and Unveiling of Statue of Stonewall Jackson at Metairie Cemetery, New Orleans, May 10th, 1881*, (New Orleans: M. F. Dunn, 1881) and Douglas, *I Rode with Stonewall*, 230-31.

Southern Historical Society Papers and *Confederate Veteran*. Southerners redirected their grief into the Lost Cause, creating an almost alternate history of the Civil War in which Jackson played a vital role.

"What If?": The Postwar Memory of Jackson, 1865-1889

There are two men who turned Jackson from a general into a legend after his death. No two writers did more to change the way people perceived Jackson within the Confederate narrative as R. L. Dabney and John Esten Cooke. Dabney influenced how Jackson became an essential part of the Confederate cause and the Lost Cause. He emphasized his generalship and piety and attempted to rationalize why the South lost the Civil War with Jackson as a key factor. On the other hand, Cooke engineered the eccentric image of Jackson that made him stand out to postwar Americans as peculiar and unique. Cooke also tended to echo Dabney's associations of Jackson's faith and the supposed destiny of independence for the southern people. Accordingly, Cooke often towed a line between reiterating Dabney's arguments and creating his own interpretations of Jackson.

Not only was Dabney Jackson's Chief of Staff for part of the war, he went on to speak and write extensively about Jackson and became a major proponent of the Lost Cause. Dabney immediately began to reshape the narrative of the Civil War. His eulogy of Jackson in 1863, "True Courage," attempted to paint the North as the aggressors in the war, and any person who opposed the South's cause were "usually among the ignorant, the mercenary, and the base."[133] According to Dabney, what loyal southerner would have suggested Jackson's sacrifice was for an undeserving cause?[134] Dabney was just getting started. Within seventy-two hours of Jackson's

[133] Dabney, *True Courage*, 10-11.
[134] Trotter, "A Triple Defense," 277.

death, Tucker Lacy wrote to Dabney urging him to produce a biography of Jackson before "a host of scriblers [*sic*]…marred…[his] high Christian character."[135] Dabney published his *Life and Campaigns of Lieut.-Gen. Thomas J. Jackson* in 1866. It served as a foundational biography, providing key primary and secondary evidence for future studies into the twentieth century. Dabney's emphasis was equal parts Presbyterian theology and Lost Cause-style apologetics.

Dabney's book was widely popular throughout the South for its rhetoric about Jackson's faith and its role in perpetuating the Confederate cause. Although the volume was published a year after the war ended, people applauded Dabney's diligence. It was considered to be such an authoritative work that future authors, even Mary Anna Jackson, practically paraphrased it.[136] Some, such as Robert E. Lee, were put off by its heavy use of the theme of martyrdom, and many future biographers avoided using that trope in their work.[137]

Life and Campaigns was a very lofty portrayal of Jackson which tended to focus on two major themes: Jackson's piety and his military accomplishments.[138] After recounting an engagement outside of Martinsburg, West Virginia, notably on a Sunday, during Jackson's Shenandoah Valley campaign, Dabney wrote that Jackson devoted the following day to religious rest "in order to pay that honor which General Jackson ever delighted to render to Almighty God, and to repay the troops, in some sort, for the interruptions of the holy day by battle."[139] According to Dabney, Jackson decreed that the next day after the engagement, Monday, must serve as an observance of the Sabbath. He did this to ensure that he gave glory to God for his own performance and of his army. His men thanked God for their own reasons while also

[135] Beverly Tucker Lacy to R. L. Dabney, May 13, 1863, Jackson Papers, Davis Collection, Tulane University.
[136] Hettle, "The Minister, the Martyr, and the Maxim," 354.
[137] Ibid., 364.
[138] For a lengthier discussion of this in Dabney's book, see Hettle, "The Minister, the Martyr, and the Maxim," 355-56.
[139] Dabney, *Life and Campaigns*, 384.

making sure that the Sabbath is observed since a battle occurred on the holy day, something Jackson abhorred. What Dabney fails to consider from a theological point of view is the absurdity of holding the Sabbath on a Monday, despite killing thousands of men the day before. In that singular sentence, Dabney spoke to Jackson's piety, the role that God played in his victories and the victories of the Confederacy, his gratitude to his men, and his compassion for their spiritual well-being. Multiplying this over the course of a 700-page book created a strong propaganda tool on behalf of the early iteration of the Lost Cause.

Dabney continued to write Jackson propaganda throughout Reconstruction. In an 1872 speech, he referenced two letters from Jackson to his wife.[140] In the first, he urged her not to sell her Confederate bonds because every ounce of gold in citizens' hands is less for the Richmond government. The second argued that evil and greed had taken hold of the South in the form of war profiteers who drove up prices for goods and try to make as much money as possible during the war. Jackson damns them since he and his army lived off few rations and supplies while fighting and dying for the cause. Dabney painted Jackson as a "picture of steadfastness," but more importantly he argued that the level of greed in the Confederacy demonstrated that "this people could not righteously be free, and was not fit for it, and that God was just."[141] Jackson's values of "truth and justice and devotion" could not overcome the inherent greed of the southern people, thereby negating their crusade for independence. Thus, Jackson was taken from them as a heavenly reward for his piety and valor.[142] Dabney's argument is a very interesting one. Written in 1872, the harsh reality he displayed seems to be a critique of white southerners, but it is largely an excuse. Rather than accept that the Confederacy was legitimately defeated on the

[140] The letter pertaining to selling her bonds is undated, but it is certainly from 1861-1863, and the second letter is from Christmas 1862.
[141] R. L. Dabney, "Stonewall Jackson: A Lecture delivered in Baltimore, in November, 1872," *SHSP* XI (Jan.-Dec., 1883): 157.
[142] Ibid., 156.

battlefield, Dabney instead uses Jackson as a barometer of white southern piety. He transferred blame for defeat to something unverifiable and perhaps even supernatural.

Alongside R. L. Dabney was fellow Virginian John Esten Cooke, who served as a champion of Jackson's character and memory. Cooke was one of the South's preeminent authors of the antebellum and postbellum, and his writing was often themed with a romanticization of antebellum Virginia, characterized as a golden age. In addition, he frequently profiled prominent Confederate figures, including Jackson. Stonewall served as a perfect mixture of bravery and piety in the eyes of the white South, and Cooke seized upon this by creating an "instant biography." These works were published very quickly, sometimes weeks after a death such as Jackson's.[143] Cooke created his initial study for the express purpose of capitalizing on the Confederacy's sorrow while also reinforcing his disdain for the North. In this instance, Cooke's Jackson biography was first published in a series of short literary contributions in the *Southern Illustrated News*, and they served as the literary basis for his major work, *Stonewall Jackson: A Military Biography* (1866).[144]

Cooke echoed Dabney's arguments linking Jackson's faith with the supposed promise of independence. Written just after his wounding at Chancellorsville, Cooke described Jackson as "the expression of [Southern] faith in God and in itself" and that he was "born for [the] purpose" of bringing the Confederate people to the promised land of independence.[145] As a penitent

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[143] See John Esten Cooke, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson. From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintance* (New York: C. B. Richardson, 1863). Just over a month after Jackson's death, Charles Hallock published a Jackson biography that encompassed "a full and accurate account of the Leading Events of his Life, his Dying Moments, and the Obsequies at Richmond and Lexington." In "Stonewall Jackson," *Semi-Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC), June 23, 1863.

[144] The *Southern Illustrated News* was the Confederacy's response to being cut off from viewing Northern newspaper publications such as *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* while also a medium for creating distinctly Southern literature. This publication acted as a new national Confederate newspaper, beginning in Richmond in September, 1862 and lasting only through the war. It also featured poems, fiction, history, lifestyle information, book reviews, advertisements, and sometimes combatted pieces from Northern publications.

[145] Cooke, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson*, 7-8.

Christian, Cooke argued that the wounded Jackson could only "submit his spirit humbly to the decree of that merciful God who had never deserted him, and to whom he bowed with simple childlike humility."[146] Upon learning the only option of preventing his death from the musket ball was amputation, Jackson exhibited his "manly spirit" by initially refusing to have his wounded arm removed.[147] Cooke's *Life of Stonewall Jackson* (1863) reinforced a common trope of Jackson as the Confederacy's Moses – He was to deliver the southern people to the promised land of independence, but he failed. Cooke also continued the comparison of Jackson and Cromwell, arguing that both men rose to prominence because they were chosen by God.[148] So, southern authors had to redirect his sacrifice and their defeat in a more positive direction.

Perhaps Cooke's most influential contribution to the memory of Jackson was the perpetuation of Jackson's eccentricities, which pervaded postwar publications. Cooke was a romance author, which entailed a certain degree of fantasy combined with historical fact. Accordingly, his depictions of Jackson were often only partially truthful. In his writing, Cooke readily published apocryphal stories. Tales of Jackson retiring to bed with his boots and spurs still on, taking icy showers in "puris naturalibus," slapping his hand on his side and his lips "ever moving in ejaculatory prayer" as he rode his horse served to perpetuate a complex image of Jackson. Perhaps the most common myth Cooke perpetuated was Jackson sucking on lemons in the middle of a battle. Although any other person could have done all of these things, Cooke argued that "these things in General Stonewall Jackson are strange or comic, and become at once the food of popular stories."[149] Wallace Hettle clarifies that Cooke associated these eccentricities

[146] Cooke, *Stonewall Jackson: A Military Biography*, 262.
[147] Ibid., 263.
[148] Ibid., 17.
[149] John Esten Cooke, *Stonewall Jackson and the Old Stonewall Brigade* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1900), 25.

with Jackson because they charmed publishers and readers.[150] As a result, future biographies and historical works that used him as a source often repeated these same half-truths, which further cemented them as historical fact.

Hettle points the finger at Cooke, as well as former Confederate officer Richard Taylor, for concocting and perpetuating these "myths" which skewed the historical portrait of Jackson.[151] Taylor also personified Jackson in his memoir, published in 1879, as a crazed, lemon-sucking, hard-driving lunatic who was, at times, a poor commander.[152] While Taylor did so to bring Jackson down to the level of a more "common man," many southerners simply added it to the general's persona as a quirk rather than a character deficiency. Taylor was particularly harsh toward Jackson, leaving the author largely alone in his extensive criticism. While others, like Henry Kyd Douglas, argued that Jackson "was a normal human being, not a mythological creation," Taylor attacked Jackson's physical traits and his personality. Although Wallace Hettle indicates that Taylor had "neither the desire nor the ability to trash a dead Confederate hero," Taylor's words seem to indicate that he attempted to do just that but in more muted language.

His descriptions are a combination of strange quirks and physical traits combined with thinly veiled criticism of his leadership.[153] Furthermore, when he met Jackson, he came upon a "pair of cavalry boots covering feet of gigantic size, a mangy cap with visor drawn low, a heavy, dark beard, and weary eyes – eyes I afterward saw filled with intense but never brilliant light."[154]

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[150] Wallace Hettle, "A Romantic's Civil War: John Esten Cooke, Stonewall Jackson, and the Ideal of Individual 'Genius,'" *Historian*, vol. 67, no. 3 (fall 2005): 435

[151] See Hettle, "A Romantic's Civil War," 435. And, Hettle, *Inventing Stonewall*, 53-68.

[152] See Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction*, 50.

[153] Taylor was quite harsh in his critique of Jackson. He wrote that during the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Jackson's performance was rather sub-par overall. He wrote, "The winter march on Romney had resulted in little except to freeze and discontent his troops…At Kernstown, three miles south of Winchester, he was roughly handled by the Federal General Shields, and only saved from serious disaster by the failure of that officer to push his advantage…" (49). Furthermore, he argued that Jackson "was fortunate in his death, he fell at the summit of glory, before the sun of the Confederacy had set.

[154] Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction*, 49.

In one sentence, Taylor created an uninspiring physical portrait of Jackson. But perhaps his longest-lasting creation was that of the lemon myth. Taylor wrote that he did not know where Jackson got his lemons, but he always seemed to have one on hand.[155] Not lost on readers was an image of Jackson pausing to bark orders at his subordinates before going back to ritually sucking on his lemons. Furthermore, the relative lack of information about Jackson's early life allowed Cooke to invent his novel ideas and push them out into what Hettle terms the "vacuum" of unsubstantiated facts.[156] Thus, when Taylor created the story of Jackson sucking on lemons in the heat of battle, most southerners saw no reason not to believe the memoir of a former Confederate officer.[157] Indeed, Jackson had been a strange person, but he was *their* strange person who sacrificed his life for their betterment.

Although anecdotes about Jackson's eccentricities were talked about whenever he was absent, these tales were not widely written about during the war. Neither Dabney nor Jackson's widow, Mary Anna, discussed his peculiarities in their works. Instead, they focused on his piety and military skills.[158] These mythologized stories, including the Barbara Frietchie incident, only deepened Americans' fascination with Jackson. This fascination developed into a cult-like admiration by the end of the Civil War, until his memory was surpassed only by the likes of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Stories of the mythical Jackson reemerged during the Lost Cause movement of the late 1870s and beyond. Gwynne argues that perhaps the most important aspect of the Barbara Frietchie story, and others like it, is the indication that Jackson was inherently American, and that it was his Americanness that had caused him to protect the old

[155] Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction*, 50.
[156] Hettle, "A Romantic's Civil War," 443.
[157] Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction*, 52.
[158] See Hettle, "A Romantic's Civil War," 434-435.

Yankee woman.[159] Thus, Jackson's memory and reputation pervaded all aspects of American life, even though evidenced by the fact that several parts of these stories were unsubstantiated and are likely cobbled together from anecdotes and second- or even third-hand information. Although propagated as believable and even historical Jackson narratives, these pieces illustrate the concept of artistic creation for the purpose of propaganda, but they also serve as examples of the power of literature on the memory of Stonewall Jackson and his personality.[160]

While Dabney and Cooke were the primary keepers of Jackson's memory after the war, others also contributed to the evolution of his image. *De Bow's Monthly Review*, for example, published a series spanning several volumes detailing the last days of the Confederacy in 1865.[161] Understandably painful to recall, publications evoked these memories to keep the spirit of the Old South alive in the minds of white southerners. Jackson was one of several important Confederate figures, immortalized in marble and print, linking the Old South and the New South. Connoisseurs welcomed artists' renderings of figures such as Lee, Jackson, and Albert Sidney Johnston, and their handiwork proved to be popular among the average southern white. In an 1866 letter to sculptor E. A. Poole, John Daniel Imboden wrote that the "remarkable" resemblance of the sculpture to the real Jackson brought his memory alive once again.[162]

As the white southern populace united in their spirit of remembrance, more and more stories and memories of Jackson came to the forefront. In 1875, VMI published a 600-page book profiling graduates and students who fell during the war. Unsurprisingly, Jackson's tribute far

[159] Gwynne, *Rebel Yell*, 560.
[160] Although Barbara Fritchie was a real person whose age and place of residence match what is said in Whittier's poem, neighbors of Fritchie claim she was ill at the time the event supposedly occurred. Furthermore, there are no records of Confederate soldiers serving under Jackson who can recall this moment.
[161] See "Last Days of the Confederacy," *De Bow's Monthly Review*, Vols. 7-8 (Jan.-Aug. 1870).
[162] John Daniel Imboden to E. A. Poole, Oct. 6, 1866, Virginia Historical Society Archives.

outweighed the other approximately 240 cadets in the rest of the book.[163] His death was a rallying cry for southerners to remember the cost of the war. Many publications used his demise as an example of the sacrifices southerners were willing to make for their great crusade. Jackson was both the most significant casualty and the strongest symbol demonstrating the righteousness of their cause. Editorials and publications frequently reprinted details of Jackson's death, military accomplishments, and piety and character.[164] While many of these reprints did not feature any new information, the mere republishing of them represents a concerted effort to keep the memory of Jackson, and thus the Confederate cause, alive.

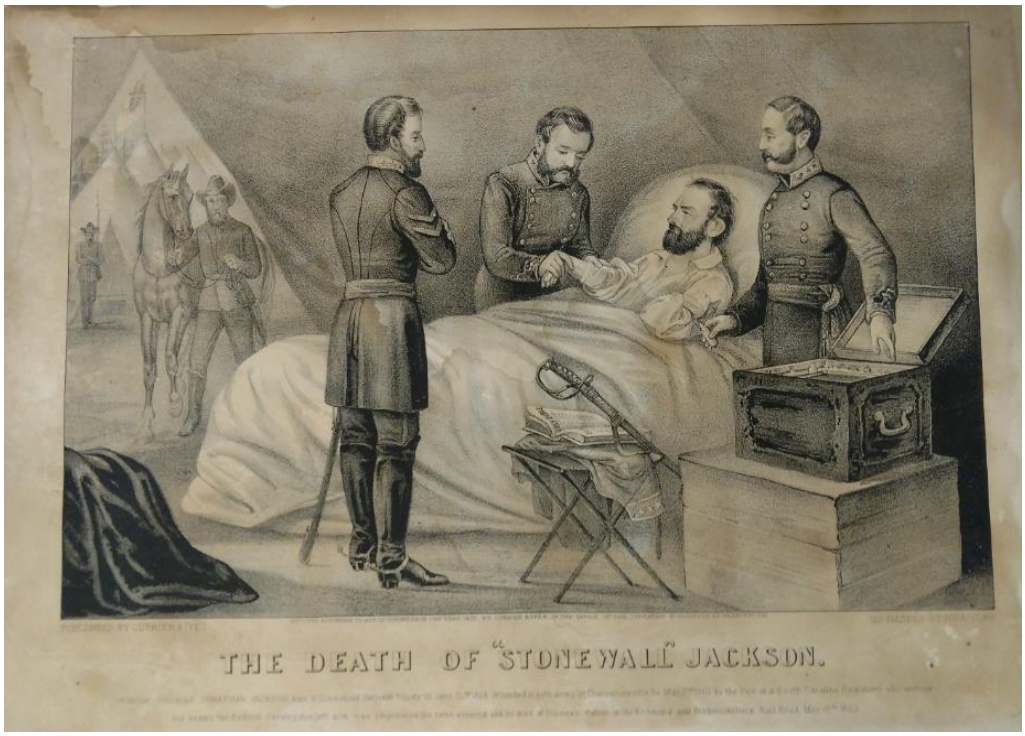

Figure 1: "Death of Stonewall Jackson" – 1872[165]

[163] "VMI in Civil War FAQ," *Virginia Military Institute Archives*, https://www.vmi.edu/archives/civil-war-and-new-market/vmi-in-civil-war-faq/.
[164] See Hunter McGuire, "How Stonewall Jackson Died," *De Bow's Monthly Review*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (May-June 1870): 477-78.
[165] Originally created by Currier & Ives in 1872 and published by the Library of Congress. This image is public domain.

Currier and Ives was a printing company based in New York City, originally headed by namesakes Nathaniel Currier and James Merritt Ives. This 1872 print demonstrates a dramatization of Jackson's death, capitalizing on the sentimental nature of white southerners during the postwar era. The soldier holding Jackson's hand could also represent the South's close connection to its beloved general.

Monuments became one of the most prevalent expressions of memory in the South. Though they also hold white supremacist connotations harkening to the Jim Crow and modern Civil Rights era, they nonetheless give historians a glimpse of the mindset of those who erected them. These monument dedication ceremonies were extravagant affairs, typically begun with a large parade featuring the mayor of the town or city, the governor of the state, and former Confederate officers still adored by southern civilians. Sometimes numbering in the thousands, spectators watched and listened as the monuments were revealed, and the speeches accompanying the unveilings were typically riddled with Lost Cause tropes.

On October 26, 1875, the Jackson Memorial Association dedicated a monument to its hero in Richmond. Funded by donors from the United Kingdom, it demonstrated Jackson's wide appeal. Virginia Governor and former Confederate General James Kemper spoke first. The language used by Kemper and the other speaker, Rev. Moses D. Hoge was quite common throughout the South, not only in honoring Jackson but all Confederates enshrined in marble and bronze. Overall, their words spoke to the personalities and character of the individuals they honored. But they also injected rhetoric of the Lost Cause and with it a blurring of the lines between Confederate heroes and American heroes and reunification on the South's terms.

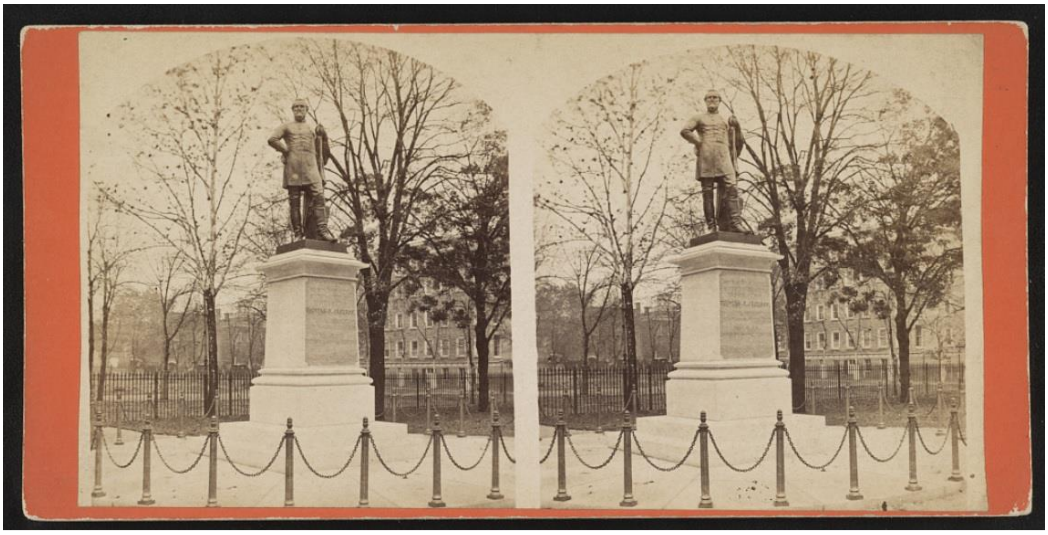

Figure 2: "Stonewall Jackson's Statue" – Richmond, VA, 1875[166]

Kemper urged there to be no more animosity between the two regions, and they should instead remember American heroes like Jackson, diminishing the fact that he earned his reputation as an enemy of the United States Federal Government. "Not for the southern people only," was the Jackson statue erected, Kemper argued, "but for every citizen of whatever section of the American republic."[167] Hoge pushed further by comparing Jackson to George Washington, a trope also used in memorializing Robert E. Lee, and equating the Confederate cause to the American Revolution.[168] This approach speaks to the methods in which defeated Confederates utilized the memories of their heroes to serve specific purposes. When Jackson was being remembered, he was their Washington. In other instances, Lee was their Washington. This demonstrates how white southerners used and changed their heroes' memories for their own emotional well-being.

[166] "Stonewall Jackson's Statue," Richmond, VA, 1875. Library of Congress. This image is public domain.
[167] "Gov. Kemper's Address," in Moses D. Hoge, *Inauguration of the Jackson Statue: Introductory Address by Governor Kemper and Oration by Rev. Moses D. Hoge, D. D., on Tuesday, October 29, 1875* (Richmond: R. F. Walker, Supt. Public Printing, 1875), 3-13, Virginia Historical Society.
[168] "Oration by Rev. Moses D. Hoge, D. D.," in Hoge, *Inauguration of the Jackson Statue*, 3-13.

The erection of this statue of a standing Stonewall is also interesting as overseas parties physically honored a dead Confederate faster than former Confederate citizens could. This certainly coincided with the debate in the South as to whether or how to remember the Civil War. While Virginians were more than willing to accept the expensive statue from their friends across the Atlantic, this drove them towards erecting a statue of Jackson that they paid for. This was their way of honoring Jackson in their own regard. Consequently, the citizens of Lexington raised enough funds to erect statues to their beloved general in 1888 and 1891.

In 1888, the Jackson Memorial Association placed a marble monument to Jackson in the woods near Chancellorsville where he fell. As many as five thousand people made their way into the dense forest to see the dedication. Newspaper accounts reported that members of the northern-based Grand Army of the Republic attended and participated in the ceremonies. Although the GAR actively stood against the flying of the Confederate flag, their presence likely stemmed from their respect for Jackson as a soldier.[169] In 1889, George Washington Custis Lee, President of Washington and Lee University, wrote to former Confederate veterans urging them to donate money to the erection of a Jackson statue in Lexington so that future generations would know his "noble christian [*sic*] life and heroic death."**[170]** Two years later, locals attended the unveiling ceremony, where orators once again evoked Jackson's piety and martyrdom. With these monuments in the 1870s and 1880s, Jackson was once again restored to the lofty plain of Confederate hero. Thereafter, southerners combined his memory with Lee's and Davis's to fuel the rhetoric of the Lost Cause.

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[169] "Jackson Monument," *Fredericksburg Star*, June 16, 1888; "Stonewall Jackson: Unvailing [*sic*] a Monument to His Memory," *The Daily Virginian* (Lynchburg), June 11, 1888; "Dedicated: The Monument that Marks where Stonewall Fell," *Richmond Dispatch*, June 14, 1888; "Stonewall Jackson: A Monument Dedicated to His Memory," *Washington Post*, June 14, 1888.

[170] Letter from G. W. C. Lee regarding funding for the Stonewall Jackson monument in Lexington, VA, December 27, 1889. Virginia Historical Society.

For white southerners of the postwar period, they wanted to remember the war, unite in reconciling from their defeat, and attempt to answer what could have been if certain events had been different. Many of these "*what if?*" scenarios tended to focus on the presence of Jackson, or the lack thereof in the second half of the war.[171] Jed Hotchkiss lamented the death of Jackson throughout the rest of the war, believing he "was in no great battle subsequent to Jackson's death in which I did not see the opportunity which, in my opinion, he would have seized, and have routed our opponents." These sentiments were pervasive throughout the South.[172] Numerous soldier diaries and articles in publications such as the *Southern Historical Society Papers* invariably tied Jackson into the narrative of the Lost Cause. Josiah Gorgas wrote that the loss of Jackson "counterbalance[d] a victory ten times as decisive…Had we not lost Jackson all would be well."[173] John Worsham also noted that "the army never recovered from the loss of Jackson."[174] General John B. Gordon and Henry Kyd Douglas expressed similar beliefs.[175]

Chiefly among these scenarios was the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg. Some former Confederates argued that Richard S. Ewell, newly promoted to corps command after Jackson's death, did not take the initiative to seize the high ground outside the town. Such a move would have given the Confederacy an advantage over the Union reinforcements coming toward the battle. Jackson's tenacity, many believed, would have tipped the balance in two different

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[171] Historians have endlessly debated this question in recent decades. See Gwynne, *Rebel Yell*, 560; Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory*, 113; Peter S. Carmichael, "'Oh, for the Presence and Inspiration of Old Jack:' A Lost Cause Plea for Stonewall Jackson at Gettysburg," *Civil War History*, vol. 41, no. 2 (June 1995): 161-167; Rafuse, *Stonewall Jackson*, 181-185; Charles Kenneth McAllister, "The Community-Acquired Pneumonia That Doomed the South: The Death of Stonewall Jackson," *Military Medicine*, vol. 175, no. 11 (Nov. 2011): 819-820; Gary W. Gallagher, "Death and Wounds Plagued Lee's Command: 'Stonewall' Jackson Proved to be Irreplaceable," *Civil War Times*, Vol. 51, no. 1 (Feb., 2012): 18-20; and James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 645.

[172] G.F.R Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War*, American ed. (New York: n.p., 1937), 706.
[173] Gorgas, *The Journals of Josiah Gorgas*, 39.
[174] Worsham, *Foot Cavalry*, 164.
[175] John B. Gordon, *Reminiscences of the Civil War* (New York: Scribner, 1903), 154, 260-61 and Douglas, *I Rode with Stonewall*, 246-47.

instances. On the first day, Lee told Ewell, who took command of Jackson's old corps, to attack the Union position on Cemetery Hill "if practicable." Ewell pondered whether the attack was indeed practicable, but Lee was likely used to Jackson being aggressive and assumed the objective would be taken.[176] Thus, if Jackson was alive, he would have taken the hill, and the Union would never have assumed the advantageous position on the heights outside Gettysburg. As one former soldier recalled after the war, "I believed at the time, and believe now, and shall always believe that if we had Jackson with us at Gettysburg he would have flanked the enemy off those heights with his corps."[177] On the second day, Longstreet's delay allowed the Army of the Potomac to occupy Little Round Top. Once again, white southerners argued that Jackson would not have been slow like Longstreet and would have seized Little Round Top and flanked the federal army just as he did at Chancellorsville.[178]

The idea of Jackson at Gettysburg came straight from the rhetoric of the Lost Cause. As Carmichael notes, raising the memory of Jackson as the savior of the alternate Gettysburg fueled the argument that the North never "out-generaled" the South.[179] While some certainly make a compelling argument, it is more important to analyze these questions of "*what if?*" as the redirection of sentiments of defeat. By looking back to the past, many southerners did not have to

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[176] For information on the Battle of Gettysburg and command decisions, see Scott Bowden and Bill Ward, *Last Chance for Victory: Robert E. Lee and the Gettysburg Campaign* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2003); Edwin B. Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968); Gary W. Gallagher, et al., *Three Days at Gettysburg: Essays on Confederate and Union Leadership* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1999); Kent Gramm, *Gettysburg: A Mediation on War and Values* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); Earl J. Hess, *Pickett's Charge – The Last Attack at Gettysburg* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg – The First Day* and *Gettysburg – The Second Day* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987); Allen Guelzo, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013).

[177] John Overton Casler, *Four Years in the Stonewall Brigade* (Girard, KS: Appeal Publishing Company, 1906), 153.

[178] See Allan, *A March Past*, 154; For more on the feud between Jubal Early and Longstreet dealing with blame about the Battle of Gettysburg, see Stephen W. Sears, "General Longstreet and the Lost Cause," *American Heritage*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (March 2005), 46-53; William Garrett Piston, *Lee's Tarnished Lieutenant: James Longstreet and His Place in Southern History* (Athens; The University of Georgia Press, 1990); Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Partners in Command: The Relationships Between Leaders in the Civil War* (New York: The Free Press, 1994).

[179] Carmichael, "A Lost Cause Plea…," 166.

face the fact that they lost the war. Instead, they created an alternate narrative of the war that helped foster the larger Lost Cause movement. This myth drastically altered the course of the Civil War's historical path and featured Jackson, the martyr general as one of its core components after the deaths of Lee and Davis.

* * *

Stonewall Jackson served as an important symbol of hope for white southerners during the first years of the Civil War. As a man who invoked God's will at every point in his life, he endeared himself to southern whites. Both groups held their own memories of Jackson, as whites remembered the stellar, pious general who gave the Confederacy its best chance of securing independence. When the war ended, Jackson's memory was not as prevalent because white southerners looked towards Robert E. Lee, whose support and dedication to the defeated South reflected the changing times. Though writers such as Dabney and Cooke reassessed Jackson's memory in the 1860s and 1870s, Lee's death opened the door to a wide renewal of interest in Jackson. Once Lee died, and white southerners "redeemed" their states, Jackson became relevant as they experienced free reign to remold Dixie in the antebellum spirit for which Jackson had fought.

Chapter Two:

Robert E. Lee and White Southern Redemption

Robert E. Lee came from Virginia nobility, and he spent his life trying to live up to the high expectations his family name carried. As a general in the Civil War, Lee's fierce defense of Virginia, and the South, and his unbridled audacity in taking the fight to the Union endeared him to southern whites. During the war, Lee engineered improbable victory after improbable victory. His efforts ultimately failed, and the Confederacy lost. Civilians rallied behind their beloved Lee, who differed from another aggressive Confederate hero in Stonewall Jackson if only because Lee survived to the end of the war. This important distinction sets him apart from Jackson. Lee played a role in the creation of his own myth, and Jackson did not because he died during the war. He privately perpetuated the idea that the Confederacy was not truly defeated but was overwhelmed by superior numbers. He also absolved himself in key Confederate defeats by blaming his subordinates. As such, Lee kickstarted his own myth, but his death allowed other white southerners to take the legend to new heights.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, Lee embodied and exemplified three major roles in the minds of white southerners: Christian soldier and leader of their cause; educator and inspiration of the new generation of southern youth; and symbol of the ideal southerner after his death and during the Lost Cause. The latter role is probably the most well-known and wide-reaching of the three individuals. This entailed a complete overhaul of Lee's image to make him seem perfect in every way. He was the general who was never defeated on the battlefield, he was so pious that he

was without sin, and his existence served as the argument that the South was right in its goal of independence. What is important is that these superlatives stemmed from fact. Lee was a talented general, although he was defeated on the battlefield on numerous occasions. He was an extremely pious Christian, although he was prone to sin. And, he believed in the righteousness of the Confederate cause, although he refused to publicly lambast Reconstruction. White southerners did this because it helped themselves. By making Lee, a native southerner, seem so great, they believed it legitimized their cause and beliefs.

One major theme underscoring all three of these roles was the association with George Washington and the Confederates' so-called second American Revolution. Both Lee and white southerners readily perpetuated this association, ostensibly to link their cause with a noble one. These three themes are prevalent in the era of the New South, and they frequently overlapped. If anything, these labels were often joined together to create an unassailable image of Lee as the ideal southern gentleman. To white southerners, Lee embodied the soldier, the educator, and the nobility of the southern cause simultaneously. Differentiating himself from the fiery oratory of someone like Jefferson Davis, Lee quietly resented Radical Reconstruction and instead worked to create a new generation of white southerners who believed in the righteousness of secession and white supremacy.

"Country be damned…*You* are the country to these men"[180]: Lee, the Civil War, and the 1860s

At dawn on April 9, 1865, the Army of Northern Virginia was attempting to break out of the chokehold the Army of the Potomac had them in near Appomattox Court House. Robert E. Lee received a dispatch from General John B. Gordon telling him that he put up the best fight he

[180] Wise's response to Lee's query regarding how the South might react to the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia in April, 1865. Quotation from Burke Davis, *Gray Fox* (New York: The Fairfax Press, 1961), 385.

could muster, but unless he was supported by fresh troops under James Longstreet, he would have no choice but to retreat. Upon hearing this news, Lee had no choice but to accept the inevitable. After four years of fighting for the independence of the South, the war for Lee and his army was finished. While Lee understood the gravity of the situation, he could hardly bear the thought of surrender. Refusing to turn his army into "bands of mere marauders" by fighting a guerrilla war, he agreed to meet with Ulysses S. Grant to discuss terms of surrender, but not before he remarked that he "would rather die a thousand deaths."[181]

This was the man that white southerners had thrown their faith behind since 1862. He had brought them numerous victories in 1862 and 1863, but by 1864 the Confederacy began to die, and there was nothing that Lee could do about it. Although Lee and Jackson shared the spotlight prior to Jackson's death, Lee became *the* icon of the southern cause.[182] To many white southerners, Jackson was the martyr, but Lee was the noble man who fought for their cause until the bitter end. White southerners respected and praised the fact that Lee dragged his half-starving, under-equipped army across Virginia attempting to hold off an onslaught by Ulysses S. Grant in 1864 and 1865.[183] As one North Carolina soldier wrote in 1863, "I felt proud that the Southern Confederacy could boast of such a man."[184] So, it was logical that the defeated South would turn to Lee for guidance. He had led them through three years of the Civil War during

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[181] Episode chronicled in Douglas Southall Freeman, *R. E. Lee: A Biography* (New York: C. Scribner's, 1934-35), 4:120-23.

[182] Sallie Armstrong Turner wrote of Jackson's death on May 12, 1863 and reference Jackson's piety and Lee's generalship: "…today we have heard of the death of Gen. Jackson. He died of pneumonia. His death is mourned throughout the Confederacy. He was a good Christian, and we have but one better officer. God can give us victory over those who invade our beautiful country. I pray their sins may find them out. God in mercy, save us Gen. R. E. Lee," in Sallie Armstrong Turner diary, loose pages, Virginia Historical Society. Turner's sentiments reflects a belief that Jackson may not have been the only connection between God and the Confederacy. Although Jackson is linked to piety and the power of God to oversee their victory, she indicates that Lee's generalship is equally blessed by God and thus could also produce victory. Sallie Armstrong Turner Diary, loose-leaf pages, Virginia Historical Society.

[183] "Mrs. M. E. Garthright's Writings to her Grandchildren, n.d.," Neal E. Wixson, ed., *From Civility to Survival: Richmond Ladies During the Civil War* (Bloomington: iUniverse, Inc., 2012), 1-3.

[184] Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *Lee the Soldier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 280.

which they experienced pain and suffering at the loss of life and their livelihoods, so it was only fitting that Lee should lead them through the rebuilding of the South which they assumed would be just as painful.[185]

Myths of Lee's ability as a commander began in earnest in 1862, and by 1865, any failures he had on the battlefield were largely forgotten. Lee was the steadfast, exceptional commander that prevented the complete collapse of the Confederacy. The western armies were sometimes thought of as inconsistent, but Lee was described as a consistent victor.[186] One diary entry noted that his army was never defeated, which is absolutely false. Yet, here we see an early iteration of the infallibility of Lee. White civilians and soldiers felt compelled to lionize Lee in order to preserve his reputation and the honor of the Confederacy.

Lee's soldiers harbored the greatest respect for him. Despite losing comrades and family members during the war, many Confederate army veterans portrayed Lee as a watchful protector who sometimes required them to give their lives for the southern cause. The honor of fighting for Lee proved to be one of, if not the, ultimate achievement of their lives. "To belong to General Lee's defeated Army is now the proudest boast," one Confederate soldier offered on his way home after the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia.[187] Lee was acutely aware of the love his soldiers had for him. Several former Confederates attempted to persuade Lee to go into

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[185] For more on this, see Thomas L. Connelly, *The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and His Image in American Society* (New York: Knopf, 1977), 91.

[186] See Emma LeConte, *When the World Ended: The Diary of Emma LeConte*, ed. Earl Schneck Miers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 76-77.

[187] L. Guild to Robert E. Lee, April 1865. Quotation found in John M. Taylor, *Duty Faithfully Performed: Robert E. Lee and His Critics* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's, 1999), 216-17. In another instance, Lee was riding towards the Battle of the Wilderness, when a soldier took off his hat and shouted "God bless Marse Robert! I wish he was emperor of this country, and that I was his carriage driver!" In J. William Jones, "General Lee to the Rear," *SHSP*, vol. 8 (1880): 32. General James A. Walker later commented that the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia "believed that whatever General Lee did was the very best that could be done; and they believed that whatever he set before them to do they could and they would do," General James A. Walker, "General James A. Walker's Account," *SHSP*, vol. 21 (1893): 230. Additionally, when Lee put himself in harm's way during the Battle of Spotsylvania, one soldier recounted that nearly every soldier felt a desire to "get in front of him, keep the bullets off." See William W. Smith, "Account of Dr. William W. Smith," *SHSP*, vol. 32 (1904): 201-215.

hiding in the mountains when Judge John C. Underwood expressed desire for Lee to be indicted for treason. Yet, Lee adamantly refused on the basis that his former soldiers may lose all pride they had in him for fleeing.[188]

Besides his prowess on the battlefield, Lee exuded piety within his army. While both the Confederacy and the Union prayed to the same God, white southerners in particular viewed the war as a moral and religious crusade. Lee was no different. "I pray that our merciful father in heaven may protect & direct us," he wrote early in 1863, "In that case I fear no odds & no numbers."[189] In the early years of the war, Lee exhibited a hopeful attitude. He focused on those traits so that rage and destructiveness did not consume him. When his home, Arlington, fell to the federal army in 1862, he took a day off from his army to attend the annual convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Richmond.[190]

Lee personally reinforced the piety during his day-to-day interactions with his men. His adjutant, Walter H. Taylor, recalled an instance in December 1863 in which he and Lee were riding along the army's lines, and the general noticed a service being conducted. He made Taylor stop, and they both listened to his men singing hymns. He listened to the sermon and benediction with his hat removed before riding off to continue the inspection. Taylor remarked that it was a carefully calculated move by Lee: it impressed everyone who witnessed the event. As Taylor noted, those who witnessed it "felt even more hopeful than before," and it reminded the men that victory could only be achieved through a divine plea.[191]

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[188] Charles Bracen Flood, *Lee: The Last Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1981), 53.
[189] Lee to Mary Custis Lee, May 31, 1863. In Elizabeth Brown Pryor, *Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters* (New York: Viking, 2007), 236.
[190] Michael Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee* (New York: Random House, 2000), 97.
[191] Taylor letter, December 5, 1863, in Walter H. Taylor, *Lee's Adjutant: The Wartime Letters of Colonel Walter Herron Taylor, 1862-1865*, ed. R. Lockwood Tower (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 94.

However, losses took their toll on Lee throughout the war, and he struggled to cope. He attempted to funnel his frustrations and depression into religion. When he was defeated at Gettysburg in 1863, he and Jefferson Davis called for a national day of fasting and prayer. Within the army, Lee suspended all military duties that were not considered to be essential. Instead, every soldier was told to pray for forgiveness and guidance. Lee declared to them,

> Soldiers! we have sinned against Almighty God. We have forgotten his signal mercies, and have cultivated a revengeful, haughty, and boastful spirit. We have not remembered that the defenders of a just cause should be pure in His eyes; that 'our times are in his hands,' and we have relied too much on our own arms for the achievement of our independence. God is our only refuge and our strength. Let us humble ourselves before him.[192]

He tried to remain positive throughout the army's struggles in 1864. He thanked troops who reenlisted that year and reassured them that the "blessings of God upon your undaunted courage will bestow peace and independence to a grateful people."[193] But, he also delved deeper into his faith and asserted it upon the army. While his men was camped for the winter in 1864, he ordered that the Sabbath should be restored as much as possible for the "personal health and well-being of the troops."[194] Lee must have believed that his army was plagued by a lack of piety, so this was his attempt to fix that void. During the siege of Petersburg in the summer of 1864, Lee remarked that he "constantly heard the shells crashing around the houses of Petersburg."[195]

By early 1865, however, many civilians believed that the war was unwinnable, and some begged for it to be over so they might be free of their physical suffering. As Dolly Lunt Burge wrote in her diary, "General Lee has surrendered his army to the victorious Grant. Well if it will

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[192] Robert E. Lee, Jr., *Recollections and Letters of General Robert E. Lee* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1905), 105-6.
[193] Quoted in Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 179.
[194] General Order Number 15, February 7, 1864, in Robert E. Lee, *The Wartime Papers of Robert E. Lee*, ed. Clifford Dowdey and Louis H. Manarin (Boston: Little, Brown, 1961), 668-69.
[195] Lee to Mary Custis Lee, July 10, 1864, in Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 237.

only hasten the conclusion of this war I am satisfied."[196] Lee himself expressed his exasperation at the "thinning ranks" in his army. In an 1863 letter to his brother, Carter, Lee wrote that the situation was dire, and he hoped that the civilians could "get back to us our stragglers and dastards." Clearly, Lee needed every able-bodied soldier to stand against Grant. But Lee kept his faith by closing that as long as God stood with the Confederacy, he feared no odds against them.[197] Additionally, he believed that southerners needed to bear the defeats "until He is graciously pleased to pardon our Sins."[198] Lee tried to remain positive until the bitter end, and he immersed himself in the argument that southerners were still God's chosen people. As such, they must suffer whatever God deemed necessary for He would always do what was best for them.

Despite his surrender, attempts to preserve and enhance his reputation began almost immediately. Excuses played an important role in creating a memory of Lee as the man who was never truly defeated by the North, thus creating an image that instilled strength in the Confederate people. One of the most prominent rationales was by embellishing the number of soldiers in Grant's army while arguing that the Army of the Northern Virginia suffered from a lack of supplies and food. Some contended that Jefferson Davis had failed to give the Confederacy a chance to win the war because of his poor decisions.[199] Above all, they declared that Lee had done everything that he could with the resources afforded him. Lee was a southerner just like them. If he was not defeated by the North, but simply overwhelmed by

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[196] Dolly Lunt Burge, *The Diary of Dolly Lunt Burge*, 1848-1879, ed. Christine Jacobson Carter (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 171.
[197] Letter from Robert E. Lee to Carter Lee, May 24, 1863, in "Rare Lee Letter Tells of "thinning ranks," *Historical Society of Western Virginia*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2012): 10. VHS.
[198] Lee to Mary Custis Lee, August 28, 1864, in Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 238.
[199] See LeConte, *When the World Ended*, 76-77 and "Judith McGuire's diary, April 13, 1865," Wixson, ed., *From Civility to Survival*, 116. See also letter from L. Guild to Robert E. Lee, April 1865, in Taylor, *Duty Faithfully Performed*, 216-217. The soldier, on his way home from Alabama, wrote to Lee that although the army was "overwhelmed by superior numbers and forced to surrender, we yet preserve intact our honor as men & soldiers…" See also a dispute between accounts by Jubal Early in the 1876 *SHSP*, vol. 1 and James A. Walker in the 1893 *SHSP*, vol. 21.

superior numbers and resources, the same logic was applied to all white southerners as a way to cope with the surrender. Thus, many white southerners sought to scrub his image clean in order to preserve the unblemished memory of their representative man.

Shortly after the war, numerous authors wrote books chronicling their beloved general. These typically stuck to Lee's early life and accomplishments during the war. Authors such as James D. McCabe and Edward A. Pollard were among of the most notable, with McCabe creating a hefty, 730-page examination of the life and campaigns of Lee less than a year after the Civil War ended.[200] William Parker Snow released a book about the exploits of *Southern Generals* in 1865, but republished the book two years later under the title, *Lee and His Generals*, in order to capitalize of Lee's increasing fame.[201] The volumes of the 1860s were typically based on fact, although the accomplishments of Lee during the Civil War were exaggerated to add luster to his reputation. This served as yet another avenue of the ever-growing mythical memory of Lee.

Richmond women were some of the most vocal proponents of Lee throughout the war. As the Confederacy's capital, support in Richmond was crucial. The Army of Northern Virginia fought so many battles for the protection of Richmond, it is not difficult to imagine that the women of the city believed Lee's forces to be their personal protectors. Many of them kept their positivity leading up to and after his surrender. Some continued to hope that Lee might make a last stand somewhere and give white southerners their liberty.[202] When Lee surrendered to Grant

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[200] See, for example, James D. McCabe, *Life and Campaigns of General Robert E. Lee* (Atlanta: National Publishing Company, 1866); and Edward Alfred Pollard, *Lee and His Lieutenants: Comprising the Early Life, Public Services, and Campaigns of General Robert E. Lee and His Companions in Arms, with a Record of their Campaigns and Heroic Deeds* (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1868).

[201] See William Parker Snow, *Lee and His Generals* (New York: Richardson & Company, 1867). Originally entitled, *Southern Generals; Who They Are, and What They Have Done* (New York: Anonymously published, 1865).

[202] Constance Cary Harrison's letter to her mother and brother, April 4, 1865, taken from Constance Cary Harrison, *Recollections Grave and Gay* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 215.

in April 1865, white southerners were disheartened, but they also understood the enormous obstacle that existed to defeat the Yankees and win the war. Oftentimes, they expressed their sorrow for Lee rather than their own feelings of sadness. "Gen. Lee is completely crushed…I do feel sorry for him…" grieved one Richmond woman.[203] "Our beloved Lee! Now that the first crushing grief for the country [Jackson's death] is passed is some measure away, how deeply I feel for *him*," lamented Emma LeConte in her diary.[204] Others hoped that Lee's surrender was part of his larger plan to secure their independence.[205] The optimism of the women of Richmond was somewhat short-lived. When Judith McGuire visited Mary Lee, Mary met her with determination. "The end is not yet," she proclaimed, "Richmond is not the Confederacy….General Lee is not the Confederacy."[206] This heartened McGuire slightly, but she and many southerners looked to Lee's army as the most effective in the field and the one most capable of bringing victory to the South.[207] Without Lee's leadership, Mary's words were hollow. Questions abounded among the women of Richmond and others in the Confederate eastern theatre as to what would happen to them if the protection from Lee's army was gone.[208]

Mary Lee, in particular, was one of the most vocal supporters of her husband and the Confederacy, although the latter may have taken precedence over the former in certain instances. During the early years of the war, Mary was relatively even-keeled regarding the impending invasion of Virginia by Union forces. But she became more radicalized to the Confederate cause when Union troops ransacked Arlington in 1862. After that point, much of her correspondence was filled with vitriol towards the Yankee invaders. She initially hoped that Arlington's

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[203] "Emmie Sublett letter to Emilie Anderson, April 29, 1865," Wixson, ed., *From Civility to Survival*, 156.
[204] LeConte, *When the World Ended*, 96.
[205] "Fannie Taylor Dickinson, April 10," Wixson, ed., *From Civility to Survival*, 8.
[206] Quotation from Mary P. Coulling, *The Lee Girls* (Durham, NC: John F. Blair Publisher, 1987), 147.
[207] See "Judith McGuire's diary, April 16, 1865," Wixson, ed., *From Civility to Survival*, 116; LeConte, *When the World Ended*, 76-77.
[208] LeConte, *When the World Ended*, 76-77.

association with George Washington might protect it, but troops ransacked the grounds anyway. She later told a friend, "Even *savages* would have spared that place for the sake of the former associations & my Father's uniform…yet they have done every thing [*sic*] to *debase* & *execrate* it."[209] Mary's anger manifested itself in her private writing during the late 1860s as she railed against Radical Reconstruction. When the federal government appropriated millions of dollars to educate recently freed slaves, Mary Lee was livid. She believed that the money should have gone to impoverished southern whites, and if she had known the North would have been so unfavorable to the white South they would have continued to fight the Civil War.[210]

Several stories would circulate of Lee's first months at home. They likely did not occur as recorded but suggest the deep affection that white southerners felt for Lee even after defeat. With the war over, Lee returned home to Arlington and await whatever punishment the federal government decided. Lee did not do much but sleep, pace on his verandah, and insist on answering every letter he received. During this time, he worked on getting Confederate prisoners released from Libby Prison. One soldier wrote to him asking for help. But he also wrote if Lee could not, he should "just ride by Libby, and let us see you and give you a cheer. We will all feel better after it."[211] There was an incident soon after Lee returned home in which a soldier from Texas arrived at Lee's home hoping to see him. Although Custis told the soldier that Lee was not receiving visitors, the Texan explained that he was about to begin his walk home. He allowed the man into the parlor just as Lee was coming down the stairs. The soldier greeted Lee, shook his

[209] Mary Custis Lee to Mrs. W. H. Stiles, July 6, 1862, Georgia Historical Society; Quotation from Mary Custis Lee to "My dear Ellen," Lexington, February 22, 1867, Robert E. Lee papers, Missouri Historical Society.
[210] Mary Custis Lee to R. E. Chilton, March 10, 1867, Missouri Historical Society. A lengthier treatment of Mary Lee's strong adherence to Confederate ideals can be found in Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 568-570.
[211] J. William Jones, *Personal Reminiscences, Anecdotes, and Letters of Gen. Robert E. Lee* (New York: D. Appleton Company, 1875), 321.

hand, and began to say something but could not. Instead, he burst into tears and walked out of the house. Lee paused for a few moments, did not say a word, and returned upstairs.[212]

During that same time period, Lee and his daughter Mildred were sitting on the back porch of their home when the doorbell rang. At the door stood a tall, lanky man dressed in homemade clothing that was rather worn. He grabbed Lee's hand and said to him,

> General Lee, I followed you four years and done the best I knowed how. Me and my wife live on a little farm away upon the Blue Ridge mountains. We heard the Yankees wasn't treating you right, and I come down to see 'bout it. If you will come up thar we will take care of you the best we know how as long as we live.

By the time he was finished speaking, the man had tears in his eyes. Lee dropped one of his hands and grabbed a box containing nice clothes that had never been opened. Lee said that he did not need anything; friends around the country had sent him more clothes than he knew what to do with, and he wished to gift the clothes to the man. The man stood proud and said he could not accept the gift. After a few moments of silence, he relented and stated, "Yes, I will, General, I will carry them back home, put them away and when I die the boys will put them on me."[213] These stories likely did not occur. Although it is plausible that Lee received visits from former soldiers and comrades, they probably did not occur in the ways they were written. It is unlikely that Lee gave a random soldier a box of clothes for coming to visit him. Instead, Lee likely gave the soldier clothes because they were worn and tattered. Nor is it likely that soldiers could rouse themselves from the horrors of a wartime prison from the mere sight of Lee's passing. These stories instead serve as examples of the love white southerners had for Lee even though he could not win the war.

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[212] Col. Clement Sulivane, "Last Meeting with Gen. R. E. Lee," *Confederate Veteran,* Vol. 28 (1920): 459.
[213] Both quotations found in W. W. Estill, "Tribute of an Appreciative Student," in Franklin L. Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee After Appomattox* (New York: Macmillan, 1922), 51-53.

As the symbolic leader of the South during Reconstruction, Lee publicly made a plea for reconciliation and reunion with the North. He urged for voluntary submission to the federal government's policies because it was the best way to restore the shattered South. Behind the scenes, however, he urged Confederates to write their own histories of the Civil War, as long as they avoided a hostile or divisive tone. He told them that animosity and memories of the war should be left in the past so that the South and the rest of the United States could move forward. At the same time, Lee wrote letters and gave a few interviews that defended the legality of secession and the righteousness of the southern cause, adhered to racist and divisive values of the Old South, and absolved himself of blame in the Confederacy's defeat. Thus, Lee outwardly preached for unity and reconciliation while privately he harbored views that undermined the idea of unity and helped perpetuate early foundations of the Lost Cause. Furthermore, Lee was instrumental in beginning his own myth by absolving himself of blame at the Battle of Gettysburg, making constant associations of himself and George Washington, and creating the argument that the Confederacy was not defeated, but overwhelmed by superior Union numbers and resources. During the reelections of local and state offices in the South, Lee advocated for white southerners to

> vote for the most intelligent, honest and conscientious men elligble to office, irrespective of former party opinions, who will endeavor to make the new Constitutions…as beneficial as possible to the true interests prosperity and liberty of all classes and conditions of the people.[214]

Furthermore, Lee penned numerous letters explaining his position to those who sought his political advice. To a magazine publisher on September 4, 1865, he wrote "It should be the

[214] Lee, Jr., ed., *Recollections*, 168.

object of all to avoid controversy, to allay passion, give full scope to reason and to every kind feeling" so that the South will recover quickly and advance into a new age.[215]

At times of potential violence over the Reconstruction oversight of the federal government, Lee felt obliged to keep the peace and promote reconciliation. Like he had done with Jubal Early and Jefferson Davis, Lee urged southerners to bide their time in order to rebuild their livelihoods and create a New South that borrowed values of the Old South. As scholar Gaines M. Foster argues, Lee played an important role in getting white southerners to accept defeat, and he did so primarily through his familiar sense of duty.[216] Lee hated the idea of a military occupation of the South, but he feared more the retribution that may come if southerners agitated northerners and the federal government.[217] Although his views are rarely referenced among anti-Reconstructionists, there is little doubt that these people were aware of Lee's sentiments.

Lee was also against the emigration of Confederate leaders after the war, as he believed that it was their duty to remain and rebuild the shattered South. And, for the most part, white southerners agreed with Lee and adopted his standpoint.[218] Despite Lee's insistence that white southerners adapt to Reconstruction and the changes most of them faced, he feared the loss of Old South values. Historian Emory M. Thomas contends that Lee still loved the old Union, the nation that his father and his idol, George Washington, founded. Although understanding that he had led a rebellion, Lee continued to believe and privately contend that the southern cause was just.[219] Thus, he dreaded Reconstruction, but he recognized that there was no sense in contesting

[215] Lee to A. M. Keiley, September 4, 1865, in Jones, *Reminiscences*, 204.
[216] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 51.
[217] See Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 258-63.
[218] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 17-20.
[219] Emory M. Thomas, *Robert E. Lee: A Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 381.

the federal government. Much of his language after the war was a dichotomy between reconciliation for the future of the South while defending aspects of the Old South, except for slavery.[220]

As such, he continued to silently resent Reconstruction. In February 1866, Lee was summoned to Washington to testify before Congress regarding his opinion of Reconstruction and reconciliation in the South. he was asked a series of questions about his views of recently freed slaves and the feelings of other southerners. Lee's answers were noncommittal, as he hated the idea of testifying before Congress about northern reconstruction of his home state and the South. He broadly painted a portrait of a white South that was more than willing to accept the education of former slaves and to employ them in meaningful work.[221] In his answers, Lee professed his own notions of black inferiority which perfectly exemplified the feelings of the white South. The African Americans he met did not care to accumulate wealth and property like their white counterparts. "They are an amiable, social race," Lee stated, "They like their ease and comfort, and, I think, look more to their present than their future." Furthermore, when asked about the potential results of an election that included black suffrage, Lee balked at the idea, arguing that "If the black people now were allowed to vote, it would, I think, exclude proper representation; that is, proper, intelligent people would not be elected."[222] Lee's answers and sentiments regarding African Americans exemplified Lee's loyalty to the racial views of the antebellum South.

Lee largely avoided the topic of Reconstruction and politics in the postwar period. He retired to the small town of Lexington, Virginia, nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains. There,

[220] Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 265.
[221] *Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, at the first session, Thirty-ninth Congress* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1866), 130-31.
[222] *Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction,* 133-134.

Lee was mostly isolated from the outside world and could get away from the havoc he had ironically helped to wreak over his native state. As biographer Marshall W. Fishwick wrote, "Lee's life after Appomattox can be summed up in six words: retreat, resurgence, reconciliation, resignation, death and resurrection."[223] Unfortunately, Lee's status as a southern icon prevented him from enjoying total isolation. As Thomas put it, the "rancor of Reconstruction sought Lee out, made of him more than ever a Southern symbol, and provoked him to private rhetoric only slightly less vitriolic than his wife's."[224] Thomas refers to Lee's private letters which provide greater detail regarding his attitudes towards Reconstruction.

Outwardly, Lee professed reconciliation. When he received an invitation to attend a memorial ceremony in Gettysburg, he politely declined, citing prior commitments. Part of his response served as a perfect example of his postwar attitudes: "I think it wiser moreover not to keep open the sores of war, but to follow the example of those nations who endeavored to obliterate the marks of civil strife and to commit to oblivion the feelings it engendered."[225] With this remark, Lee encapsulated an idea that other Confederates chose not to follow. Lee understood that the war was over and the time for healing had begun. While defending the legality of secession, nevertheless, he knew that the window for southern independence was now closed. Unfortunately, many other white southerners did not see it that way as they used an altered image of Lee to reinforce the idea of the later "Lost Cause." This idea has resurfaced in our present time with the Confederate monument controversies in numerous American cities. That many people do not know about or simply ignore Lee's words speaks to the ways in which his memory was manipulated by his comrades and other white southerners following his death.

[223] Marshall William Fishwick, *Lee After the War* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1963), 222.
[224] Thomas, *Robert E. Lee*, 384.
[225] REL to Hon. D. McConaughy, August 9, 1869, Robert E. Lee Papers, Washington and Lee.

But within his correspondence and personal meetings, he had a much more critical opinion of Reconstruction and the Civil War. In public, Lee urged his fellow southerners to make the best of a bad situation and elect the best representatives possible and endorse the resultant state constitutions. When people asked Lee for guidance, he wrote them back with similar language. In a letter to Robert Ould, Lee advised:

> I think that all persons entitled to vote should attend the polls & endeavor to elect the best available men to represent them in the Convention, to whose decision everyone should submit. The preservation of harmony & kind feelings is of the utmost importance & all good citizens should exert themselves to secure it & to prevent the division of the people into parties.[226]

But Lee was also careful to ensure that his name was not thrust into the public sphere as an opponent of Reconstruction, and he hoped correspondents like Ould would not publish his letters to "allay the strife that I fear may arise in the State."[227] On the other hand, he also believed that cooperation with the North would hasten white control over the South more quickly than if southerners responded to occupation with violence and fiery rhetoric.[228] He was, after all, cast from the mold of the Old South which favored a racial hierarchy. Lee was keenly aware of the effect his opinions had on the southern populace. A vast majority viewed his word as law, so he was careful in making his sentiments public. Thomas argues that although Lee occasionally revealed his true views, he was adept at making sure it was neutral enough to prevent his enemies from using them against him.[229]

Despite the strong reverence for Lee as a man and a general, he was not immune to criticism in the years after the war. One of Lee's enduring traits, and one of the major pillars of his fame in the postwar South, was his confidence on the battlefield, which endeared him to his

[226] Lee to Ould, Lexington, March 29, 1867. W&L.
[227] See Thomas, *Robert E. Lee*, 384.
[228] Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 276.
[229] Thomas, *Robert E. Lee*, 383.

men and southern civilians. Lee himself was seduced by his own popularity. As victories mounted in 1862 and 1863, Lee truly began to believe that his army was invincible, which caused him to fight too aggressively, costing him more casualties than he could afford. More so, Michael Fellman argues that this belief in the invincibility of the Army of Northern Virginia instilled in him a sense of pride and egotism which had been largely absent in the past.[230]

Though most white southerners lionized Lee after the war, some dissenting voices could heard in the mid- to late-1860s. Specifically, some soldiers suggested that Lee's aggressiveness had cost the Confederacy the war. Most of this criticism focused on the Battle of Gettysburg.[231] While the most prominent Lost Cause accounts of the 1870s and beyond readily heap blame for the defeat on James Longstreet and other factors, Confederate civilians and soldiers of the previous decade readily blamed Lee. They believed that the defeat may have hastened the end of the war. Despite some soldier accounts arguing that the Confederacy's chances of winning the war was in jeopardy after Gettysburg, Gallagher argues that many Confederate civilians and some soldiers were not convinced. Specifically, newspapers, diaries, and other sentiments from July through August 1863 indicate that Confederates were not forlorn *at that time*.[232] Instead, the evidence suggests that despondency over Gettysburg manifested itself later on in the war or in the postwar period when many white southerners attempted to figure out when their cause was lost and where it went wrong. It took almost a year after the battle ended for those sentiments to

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[230] Michael Fellman, "Struggling with Robert E. Lee," *Southern Cultures*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Fall 2002): 13.
[231] See Clifford Dowdey, *Death of a Nation: The Story of Lee and His Men at Gettysburg* (New York: Knopf, 1963); Peter S. Carmichael, *Audacity Personified: The Generalship of Robert E. Lee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Gary W. Gallagher, *Lee & His Army in Confederate History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Gary W. Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998); Joseph T. Glatthaar, *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Collapse* (New York: Free Press, 2008); Troy D. Harman, *Lee's Real Plan at Gettysburg* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003); Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg – The First Day* and *Gettysburg – The Second Day* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001 and 1987, respectively); Stephen W. Sears, *Gettysburg* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003) for more regarding the controversy of blame at Gettysburg.
[232] Gallagher, *Lee & His Army in Confederate History*, 86-93. See pages 86-91 for an in-depth analysis of the positive reactions stemming from the defeat at Gettysburg.

sink in, and from then on, southerners critically analyzed where the blame lay at Gettysburg. At the end of the war, Lee received a modicum of blame for that particular defeat, as the commanding general who ultimately made the decisions. However, once the war ended and Lee became Dixie's idol, southerners like Jubal Early readily passed blame onto others. Overall, Lee certainly deserved some of the blame for the loss at Gettysburg, but this sentiment was intentionally abandoned after Lee died in order to preserve his memory as the perfect military genius.

Even after the war, southerners wondered where and how Gettysburg went so wrong. In between Lee's Congressional testimonies in 1866, an old Confederate veteran continuously tried to approach Lee to talk to him. However, a group of former Confederate officers would not allow it. After several attempts, Lee's staff let him through, and Lee shook his hand and left. As he walked away, the man shouted, "General, I have always thought that if I ever had the honor of meeting you face to face, and there was opportunity allowed me, I would like to ask you a question which nobody but you can answer. I seem to have that opportunity now…What was the reason you failed to gain the victory at Gettysburg?" Although he likely wished to walk away, Lee replied that it was a long story, and he would have to wait for another meeting in the future to discuss it.[233]

Importantly, Lee was also culpable in the shifting the cause of defeat at Gettysburg to others. In the few years between the end of the war and his death, Lee gave numerous interviews about the war in place of a military narrative he wished to write, but never materialized. In speaking to the Gettysburg question, he changed his view of the battle several times over the course of the war in his reports, but he decided to settle on the version of events he recounted in

[233] Recounted in Margaret Sanborn, *Robert E. Lee: The Complete Man, 1861-1870* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1967.

January 1864. He recalled this version and attempted to absolve himself of the blame some contemporaries had laid upon him, some of which was based on interviews with James Longstreet who also sought to clear his name.[234] Lee told William M. McDonald in 1868 that the battle "commenced in the absence of correct intelligence," which held Stuart and his cavalry responsible, and Lee repeatedly described Longstreet as "often slow."[235] In a conversation with William Allan that same year, Lee struck another heavy blow upon the deceased Stuart by arguing that his "failure to carry out his instructions" led to poor timing on the part of the army's corps commanders.[236] Even during the war, Lee attempted to criticize others at various points. In one letter to General John Bell Hood, Lee claimed that although the quality of soldiers in the army was unmatched, there was a lack of quality in officers. "Our army would be invincible if it could be properly organized and officered," Lee wrote.[237]

In these interviews, Lee cleared himself of any wrongdoing, offering up excuses that amounted to factors deemed to be out of his control. Gallagher adds that Lee also tended to downplay the failure of his goal of invading the North. His postwar comments "could have admitted greater disappointment," speaking to Lee's desire to stay in the North until late summer or early fall and not anticipating the massive casualties he sustained. He also fed into the postwar question of what would have happened had Jackson not been killed at Chancellorsville. In 1870, Lee wrote that "If Jackson had been [at Gettysburg]," the Confederacy "would have

[234] See Pollard, *Lee and His Lieutenants* and William Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861-1865* (1866; revised ed., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882).
[235] Quoted from Lee to William M. McDonald, April 15, 1868, in Connelly, *The Marble Man*, 214-15, and Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 162-63.
[236] William Allan, "Memoranda of a conversation with Gen. R. E. Lee, held Feb. 15, 1868," in Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *Lee the Soldier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 18.
[237] Lee to John Bell Hood, May 21, 1863, in Lee, *The Wartime Papers of Robert E. Lee*, 490.

succeeded."[238] As such, Lee played a critical role in the establishment of the Lost Cause mentality of altering the narrative of Gettysburg, and the Civil War, to benefit the perception of the South and individuals such as himself. As Fellman expertly puts it, "Robert E. Lee thus became the first author of the proposition that at Gettysburg Robert E. Lee did no wrong and that others had been to blame."[239]

Lee felt it his duty to produce a narrative of the Civil War from his perspective as a tribute to the men of the South who died fighting for their cause. White southerners were eager to see Lee complete his written history of the Civil War and frequently volunteered money, sources, or general assistance.[240] Reverend Robert S. Clark offered to canvas door to door in several Mississippi counties if it meant more people could read Lee's "reliable history of the second revolution."[241] J. C. Parks wished to sell Lee's history and attempted to entice him by offering half of the proceeds to widows and orphans of fallen Confederate soldiers.[242] It is likely that these white southerners viewed the completion of Lee's history as the completion and validity of their experiences and agency from the war.

Despite the strong support, Lee never brought himself to write their story. He confessed in 1867 of "little desire to recall the events of the war" and that he had read no "work that has been published on the subject."[243] Evidence largely contradicts the statements Lee made in 1867. Despite his insistence on not wanting to remember the war and the painful memories, Lee

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[238] Allan, "Memoranda," 18. There are multiple interviews held in this document despite the title indicating it occurred solely in February 1868.
[239] Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 163.
[240] See J.M. Handely to R.E. Lee, March 1, 1866, C.B. Richardson to R.E. Lee, March 13, 1866. W. Scott Galore offered $1,000 of his own money to aid the publication process, W. Scott Galore to R.E. Lee, March 15, 1866; J.R. McKee to R.E. Lee, June 24, 1866. REL Papers, W&L.
[241] R.S. Clark to R.E. Lee, April 10, 1866. REL Papers, W&L. A subsequent letter was sent by P.G. Sallis and Captain Sam Gossing, former soldiers of the Confederate armies, who vouched for the "fitness and worthiness" of "one of our best and finest citizens," Rev. Clark. See Sallis and Gossing to R.E. Lee, April 10, 1866.
[242] J.C. Parks to R.E. Lee, May 4, 1866. REL Papers, W&L.
[243] Lee to Edward A. Pollard, January 24, 1867, and Lee to Albert Taylor Bledsoe, October 28, 1867. Lee Family Papers, VHS. More found in Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 51.

received numerous manuscripts from former colleagues, presumably for his approval before publication. When Jubal Early sent Lee his memoir, Lee cautioned Early to remove "all epithets or remarks calculated to excite bitterness or animosity between different sections of the Country."[244]

Lee knew that Early regularly railed against Reconstruction and likely agitated the North. As a result, Lee spent much of his postwar life attempting to reign in Early and others who helped start the Lost Cause, including Jefferson Davis once he was released from federal prison. Fellman points out that Lee did not disagree with what these men were saying but was instead concerned with their "tone and potential effectiveness."[245] This was a calculated move by Lee. He knew that agitation among the white southern populace would impede the physical restoration of the South. By approving or providing his thoughts on these manuscripts, Lee demonstrated a stronger desire for remembrance on the South's terms. Although he wanted the authors to sound reconciliatory in their manuscripts, he did not disagree with arguments regarding the legality of secession and the righteousness of the cause.

As early as the beginning of the Civil War, Lee was viewed by many in the South as the next George Washington, or at least their version of Washington. Both led a rebellion against what they perceived to be an infringement of their rights by a tyrannical government. The connection between Lee and George Washington was also rooted in his legal relationship to the revolutionary fighter. Lee's wife, Mary, was the daughter of Washington's stepson.[246] His father, Henry Lee, was a comrade and close friend of Washington's and served alongside him in the American Revolution. As a member of the planter aristocracy of Virginia, it is unsurprising that Lee embraced the roots of the family he married into. From the beginning, white southerners

[244] Lee to Jubal A. Early, October 15, 1866, REL Papers, W&L.
[245] Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 276-77.
[246] Fellman, "Struggling with Robert E. Lee," 9.

drew parallels between their secession and the American Revolution. Thus, it is unsurprising that they wanted to associate their hero and the leader of the original American rebellion.

While Thomas Connelly made the argument that the "Lee cult" began this association between Lee and Washington, Richard McCaslin effectively shows that comparisons between Lee and Washington began before the Civil War and continued throughout.[247] Col. Clement A. Evans wrote that "Lee is regarded by his army as nearest approaching the character of the great & good Washington than any man living."[248] A soldier of the 45th North Carolina Infantry noted that the "good, great and noble Washington [was] equaled by none save our own beloved Lee."[249] The Richmond *Dispatch* doubled-down on the bold statements and declared that the American Revolution was "child's play" compared to the Confederacy's struggle. Lee, the superior commander, was more than up to the challenge.[250]

Just as he had done with absolving himself of blame after the Civil War, Lee was also instrumental in fostering his association with George Washington. When speaking and writing, Lee rarely used historical references. When he did, however, they often referred to Washington. He obtained Washington relics and kept that at Arlington. While president of Washington College, he set about returning prized letters to the school which had been stolen during the war.[251] During the Battle of the Wilderness, Lee refused to abandon the front line until his soldiers began to shout for him to leave. Mary Bayard Clark, a poet whose husband was wounded during the battle, wrote, "There he stood, the grand old hero, great Virginia's god-like

[247] Richard B. McCaslin, *Lee in the Shadow of Washington* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 11-12.
[248] Clement Anselm Evans, *Intrepid Warrior: Clement Anselm Evans, Confederate General from Georgia; Life, Letters, and Diaries of the War Years,* ed. Robert Grier Stevens, Jr. (Dayton, OH: 1992), 342.
[249] Richmond *Examiner*, February 25, 1865.
[250] Richmond *Dispatch*, February 3, 1865.
[251] See Allen W. Moger, "Letters to General Lee after the War," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 1956): 63.

son, Second unto none in glory, equal of her Washington."[252] Like Washington, Lee had used his persona to help turn the tide of the battle; his men supposedly fought harder because of their love for him.[253] When Lee accepted his promotion to general-in-chief of the armies, the Richmond *Dispatch* proclaimed, "Providence raises up the man for the time, and a man for this occasion, we believe, has been raised up in Robert E. Lee, the Washington of the second American Revolution."[254]

The third thrust in the postwar memorialization of Lee was the creation of the argument that the Confederacy was defeated by the overwhelming numbers and resources of the North. This, of course, deflected any sort of blame away from the Confederate military or civilians, and it instead became a source of pride among white southerners. They had not lost because they lacked the willpower; they lost because the North was just too strong. If anything, they deserved praise for fighting for as long as they did.[255] Lee had a strong desire for white southerners to "attempt to educate the world about Confederate valor and steadfastness." That manifested itself in his constant urging that the reason the South lost was because of the North's superior military numbers.[256]

The argument that numbers drastically affected the outcome of the Civil War stemmed from Lee's General Orders No. 9, written on April 10, 1865 in response to his surrender to Grant:

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[252] In Emily V. Mason, ed., *The Southern Poems of the War* (Baltimore: John Murphy & Co., 1868), 386.
[253] McCaslin, 168.
[254] Richmond *Dispatch*, February 7, 1865.
[255] This is a typical Lost Cause trope. See Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*; David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknapp Press of Harvard, 2001); William C. Davis, *The Cause Lost: Myths and Realities of the Confederacy* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1996); Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, ed., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).
[256] Gallagher, *Lee & His Army in Confederate History*, 256. See also Lee to Walter Taylor, July 31, 1865; Lee to Joseph L. Topham, August 26, 1865; and Lee to Jubal A. Early, November 22, 1865 and March 15, 1866. Lee Family Papers, VHS.

> After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources.[257]

Although it seems like an opportunity to keep his men's heads held high, it no doubt reeks of bitterness. The pride and ego Lee developed over the course of 1862 and 1863 prevented him from accepting that Grant may have outdueled him. Instead, it was easier for Lee to blame defeat on another factor. This was the first, but not the only time he would do so. Lee wrote to Confederate leaders after the war stressing the numbers argument as well as the need to print the southern version of the war. The capture of Richmond had likely destroyed much of the evidence he wanted to use, so he relied on former comrades to help him, notably Jubal Early.[258] Elizabeth Brown Pryor argues that Lee further played into this belief with the search for materials from his former comrades that substantiated his views.[259]

Jubal Early took up the reigns to drive the numbers argument that Lee had essentially began. But Early took it much further and laid the groundwork for the broader Lost Cause movement following Lee's death. As Connelly notes, Early was "perhaps the most influential figure in nineteenth-century Civil War writing, North or South," and "the driving force behind the first Lee cult."[260] When speaking about Lee on his birthday in 1872, Early charged the white South with the preservation of Confederate memory. He evoked common Lost Cause themes, alluding to Lee's character as a Virginia gentleman and leader of southern virtue, the valiant effort of the Army of Northern Virginia, and the Christian character of Lee and Jackson. White southerners were obliged to continue "cherishing the memory of our leaders and our fallen

[257] General Orders No. 9, Hdqrs. Army of Northern Virginia, April 10, 1865, in Lee, *The Wartime Papers of Robert E. Lee*, 934.
[258] Gallagher, *Lee & His Army in Confederate History*, 257.
[259] Pryor, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 469.
[260] Connelly, *The Marble Man*, 51.

comrades."[261] Thus, Early argued that honoring the memory of Lee allowed white southerners to remember the values of the Old South, through Lee, during the age of the New South.

Considering Gettysburg, his self-imposed associations with George Washington, and the overwhelming numbers argument, Lee played a significant role in the creation of his own myth. While it is impossible to know if any former Confederate would have created the argument regarding overwhelming numbers, clearly Lee's devotees used his specific argument to fan the flames of that very same tenet of the Lost Cause. Although Lee may not have intended his postwar and post-death images to be as lofty as they became, he certainly did not shy away from self-praise when it came to absolving himself of blame or his own frequent associations with George Washington. The next logical step in solidifying his place alongside Washington and helping to rebuild the South lay in Lexington, Virginia, at a small, nearly bankrupt college bearing his idol's name.

"My Boys": Robert E. Lee as President of Washington College

Perhaps Lee's most significant contribution to the South, having failed to bring the independence white southerners craved, was his presidency of what was then Washington College. Revolutionizing the curriculum, bringing in hundreds of new prospective students, and teaching them how to be southern gentlemen scholars, Lee became a symbol for self-respect in the white South. The burden of defeat weighed heavy on the people of the region, and many men questioned their manhood. After the war, Lee's leadership allowed these men to redefine their

[261] Jubal A. Early, *The Campaigns of Gen. Robert E. Lee: An Address by Lieut. General Jubal A. Early, before Washington and Lee University, January 19th, 1872* (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1872), 47.

masculinity and purpose through education.[262] Virginians were especially keen on following Lee's role as college president because he was a representative of their state. More broadly, Lee's actions as president gave hope to many across the South, although not all of them were able to experience it. As a prominent member of Virginia's elite, Lee consistently favored their children when admitting students. Lee's dedication to creating a new generation of white southern gentlemen to rebuild the ruined South catapulted him into a realm of heroism that combined his fighting and gentlemanly spirit. A position at Washington College also afforded Lee the opportunity to strengthen his association with George Washington. Although Lee had failed to achieve the success Washington enjoyed on the battlefield, he had the chance to achieve his own success at the college akin to Washington's triumphs as a statesman.

Washington College was heavily in debt and was among the worst-off in the South when Lee took over in mid-1865.[263] It sustained heavy damage during the Civil War, the student body was reduced to forty, and the faculty had not been paid in years. Thus, the administrators looked for a new president that could inject life into the ailing institution. Several months after the war ended, Lee was anxious to find some sort of work. He had been offered several lucrative ventures but declined them all. He supposedly rejected a proposal from a nobleman to occupy a county seat in England coupled with an annuity of 3,000 pounds, although the offer is likely false or greatly exaggerated. He also declined numerous business notions that would have paid him five- to-six figure salaries for the use of his name. Lee also rejected politics even though he could

[262] See Martha E. Kinney, "'If Vanquished I Am Still Victorious': Religious and Cultural Symbolism in Virginia's Confederate Memorial Day Celebrations, 1866-1930," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 106, No. 3 (Summer 1998): 237-266 and Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 435-440.
[263] Prof. Alexander L. Nelson, "How Lee Became a College President," in Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee after Appomattox*, 1.

have easily won the Virginia governorship.[264] Thus, the only enticing job would have him remain in Virginia and work toward the betterment of his beloved commonwealth.

Col. Bolivar Christian heard of Lee's situation and suggsted that Lee be offered the presidency at a meeting of the board of trustees in August 1865.[265] The board understood that having Lee serve as the president provided nearly limitless possibilities in the realm of higher enrollment, sponsors to clear their debt, and his leadership skills. All other suggested names were withdrawn, and Lee was agreed upon unanimously.[266] Perhaps Lee could successfully run the school since he failed to win their independence. However, the trustees were apprehensive given the amount of work the school needed and the exhausting war Lee had just fought.

Washington College was not the only school that sought Lee out for a leadership position. The University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee had already offered him the vice-chancellorship, and many people urged him to seek a position at the University of Virginia.[267] It was obvious that southerners wanted Lee to have influence in the rebuilding of the South. Since the military was no longer an option, education seemed to be another avenue. Judge John Brockenbrough, selected by the trustees to offer Lee the position, likewise highlighted several thoughts at the front of Lee's postwar mind: the need to help the young men of the South, many

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[264] William W. Hassler, "Robert E. Lee: The Educator," *The Georgia Review*," Vol. 21, No. 4 (Winter 1967): 503.
[265] There is some discrepancy as to whether Lee was flooded with offers of work. Several narratives of Lee purport this as fact. Rev. Henry Fields' "The Last Years of General Lee," in Edmund Jennings Lee, *Lee of Virginia, 1642-1892: Biographical and Genealogical Sketches of the Descendants of Col. Richard Lee, with Brief Notices of the Related Families* (Philadelphia: Franklin Printing Company, 1895), 422, claims Emperor Maximilian offered Lee command of Mexico's army after the Civil War. See also Dr. Henry Louis Smith, "Tribute to General Lee as an Educator," in Riley, *General Robert E. Lee after Appomattox*, 75-76. This notion was continuously perpetuated throughout the later decades of the nineteenth century. See "Washington and Lee: Views of the University," *Richmond Dispatch*, August 14, 1885, for example. Elizabeth Brown Pryor meticulously studied Lee's correspondence which, according to her, was "scrupulously responsive" and gives no indication that he received a large amount of offers for employment during the postwar period. See Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 436-440.
[266] For a more complete narrative of Lee's employment struggles, Mary's involvement in her father's employment search, and the nomination of Lee for the presidency, see Alexander L. Nelson, "How Lee Became a College President," in Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee After Appomattox*, 1-2; Flood, *Lee: The Last Years*, 82; Ollinger Crenshaw, *General Lee's College* (New York: Random House, 1969), 146-8.
[267] Captain Robert E. Lee, "Why General Lee Accepted the Presidency of Washington College," in Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee after Appomattox*, 5.

of whom had fought and potentially suffered during the war and the importance of education in rebuilding the South.[268]

Lee was reluctant to accept the offer, as he did not believe that he was physically capable of teaching classes alongside his presidential duties. Instead, he wished to focus on administrative work and fundraising for the destitute college. Lee likely accepted for several reasons. Chiefly among them was his desire to mold the young generation of white southern leaders.[269] Throughout his life, and especially during the Civil War and postwar era, Lee strived to live up to Washington's exalted name. Taking a position at a college that bore his name offered that possibility.[270] Ultimately, Lee believed that he had a duty to the future of "the country & the rising generation," although he wrote that he would have preferred a quieter life after the war.[271] By rejecting political office, which would have undoubtedly mired him in Reconstruction, and choosing to serve his native state, Lee naturally drew the adoration of the white South. They also gravitated towards Lee's outwardly expressed humility and selflessness. Beginning in the postwar era, white southerners focused on these traits rather than the ego and pride of the Civil War. Ironically, pride was a key element of the Lost Cause.

Lee eventually accepted the position of president at Washington College because he believed that the future of the South lay in the hands of the younger generation of southern men.[272] Accordingly, he took note of the crisis gripping the devastated South and saw an

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[268] Nelson, "How Lee Became a College President," 3; Crenshaw, *General Lee's College*, 146-8; Flood, *Lee: The Last Years*, 82.
[269] Lee also proclaimed to a soldier after his surrender, "Go home, all you boys who fought with me, and help build up the shattered fortunes of our old state [of Virginia]." Quotation found in Clifford Dowdey, *Lee: A Biography* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1965), 595.
[270] Lee, "Why General Lee Accepted the Presidency of Washington College," in Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee after Appomattox*, 5-6. For more consideration, see Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 436-440.
[271] Letter from Lee to Fitzhugh Lee, near Cartersville, Va., July 29, 1865, in Lee, Jr., *Recollections*, 177-78.
[272] Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 249.

opportunity to mold the youth of the South.[273] Furthermore, Connelly suggests that Lee also wished to educate the southern youth because he lost faith in the older generation that had led the South to war.[274] At the same time, his comments on accepting the presidency point to guilt about how many young men died under his command. "I have a self-imposed task, which I must accomplish," Lee wrote. "I have led the young men of the South in battle; I have seen many of them fall under my standard. I shall devote all my life now to training young men to do their duty in life."[275] As Fellman argues, Lee's new career was therapeutic and "partial compensation" for his dead soldiers.[276] If he could not win the war on the battlefield, then he could preserve the values of the antebellum South at Washington College while simultaneously modernizing the South's education and fortunes.

Some southerners were skeptical that Lee might accept the position. Washington College professor E. S. Joynes wrote that he feared Lee's financial obligation might preclude him from accepting a position offering him a modest salary or that the position was not prominent enough if Lee were to seek public office.[277] Perhaps most significant was the stress on Lee's health. Although he was only 58 years old, he was an old 58. He had already fought in two wars, served as superintendent of West Point, and had suffered a heart attack during the Civil War.[278] Lee was hesitant, but not for those reasons. Instead, he feared that the education of southern youth required a man with more strength and energy that the war left him with. In late September 1865, he wrote to the trustees that he would only accept the position if he acted as an administrator

[273] Thomas, *Robert E. Lee*, 375.
[274] Connelly, *The Marble Man*, 208.
[275] Freeman, *R. E. Lee: A Biography*, 4:296.
[276] Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 249.
[277] Joynes's comments cited in Fitzhugh Lee, "Why General Lee Accepted the Presidency of Washington College," in Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee after Appomattox*, 7.
[278] For analysis of Lee's heart health, see R. D. Mainwaring and C. G. Tribble, "The Cardiac Illness of General Robert E. Lee," *Journal of American College of Surgeons* 174, no. 3 (March 1992): 237-244.

only and if the trustees believed that his presence would not bring hostility and potentially damage the reputation of Washington College.

The white South heralded Lee's acceptance of the position and his pronounced devotion to the education of white southern youth. The Richmond *Whig* proclaimed that Lee undertook "as noble a work as ever engaged the attention of men."[279] According to General William N. Pendleton, when Lee first arrived in Lexington to accept the presidency, news spread rapidly of his arrival and the townspeople gathered "*en masse*" to beg the "privilege of touching the old hero's palm."[280] The college planned to hold a grand ceremony for his inauguration in October 1865. The trustees expected to send out many invitations, a band to play, and groups of young women in white robes holding flowers and singing songs of welcome. Lee dispensed with these desires and wished only to get to work, and the lack of ceremony disappointed many in Lexington who were eager to celebrate the arrival of Lee.[281]

Some in the North were more than willing to let the divisiveness of the Civil War remain in the past and allow the South to catch up to the progress of the North. Henry Ward Beecher, speaking at a meeting in 1868, welcomed the use of Northern resources to help rebuild the South, particularly through education. He, along with a group of men, wanted to create an endowed professorship at Washington College to further aid the education of white southern youth.[282] He reasoned that any person who rebelled and afterwards actively aided the rebuilding of the South was thusly forgiven. Lee was "the very man to take charge of a great educational institution in the South," Beecher concluded.

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[279] Richmond *Whig*, quoted in Crenshaw, *General Lee's College*, 148.
[280] "Interesting Facts in General Lee's History," *Staunton Spectator*, February 7, 1871.
[281] "Inauguration of General Lee, as President of Washington College," *New York Herald*, October 2, 1865, republished in Lexington *Gazette* on October 11, 1865. In Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee after Appomattox*, 12.
[282] "A More than Doubtful Charity," *Harrisburg Telegraph*, May 20, 1868.

Others were not so sure and maintained that Lee did not demonstrate a level of believable submissiveness or remorse. The *New York Independent* seethed:

> We do not think that a man who broke his solemn oath of allegiance to the United States, who imbued his hands in the blood of tens of thousands of his country's noblest men, for the purpose of perpetuating human slavery, and who was largely responsible for the cruelties and horrors of Libby, Salisbury and Andersonville, is fitted to be that teacher of young men.[283]

Rev. Dr. B. F. Crary penned a scathing letter to the New Orleans *Daily Tribune* contending that Lee was "the most inexcusable, vilest traitor of the whole crowd of criminals whom he headed." The idea of Lee heading an institution of learning was too much to bear for Crary. He clearly understood the danger of allowing a leader of the rebellion to mold the minds of young southerners. "We would as soon send our son to a pest-house for health," Crary spat, "or to a gambler's den for education."[284]

Despite the criticism, Lee's usefulness to the college cannot be understated. When he became president, the college, buildings and funding, was in ruins. During his tenure, Lee revitalized the school by revamping the curriculum to reflect the modern era of education, and he secured crucial funding to prevent the closure of the college. He added professorships and courses in modern languages, chemistry, civil and mechanical engineering, natural history, and experimental philosophy.[285] Historian Walter Creigh Preston later called this revitalization "astounding…a leap in the dark, with a prayer and a hope."[286] Lee so successfully changed the

[283] Quoted in Thomas, *Robert E. Lee*, 376.
[284] "Robert E. Lee and Washington College," *South Carolina Leader* (Charleston, SC), Nov. 25, 1865. The *South Carolina Leader* was an African American newspaper in the South, and the reprint of this letter demonstrates the newspaper's agreement with Crary's sentiments; or the paper thought it at least thought-provoking.
[285] "President Lee and Practical Education," *The Galveston Daily News* (Galveston, TX), Oct. 24, 1869. For an excellent analysis of Lee's educational philosophy, see Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 249-254.
[286] Walter Creigh Preston, *Lee: West Point and Lexington* (Yellow Springs, OH: The Antioch Press, 1934), 62.

poor fortunes of Washington College that James A. Lyon believed his potential departure through retirement or death might preclude future southerners from patronizing the institution.[287]

Although the revamping of the curriculum was an important step in advancing Washington College, Lee was much more focused on molding young, Christian gentlemen. Despite the school's stance as being non-denominational, Lee quickly took it upon himself to instill an adherence to Christian Protestantism, of which he was a part. He told the board of trustees, "I dread the thought of any student going from the college without becoming a sincere Christian."[288] Even though he declined to teach moral philosophy, Lee knew exactly who to hire for that vacancy. He attempted to recruit Reverend Churchill L. Gibson to become the Chair of Moral Philosophy, writing to him that "The occupant should be properly a man of true piety, learning & science; [who can] make His Holy religion attractive to the young, to impress it upon their hearts, & to make them humble Christians…"[289] Lee also reinforced his goal of molding Christian gentleman by sitting in the left front pew for service every morning at 7:45. He never made church attendance mandatory, but his continued presence combined with the high esteem his students held for him made a convincing argument. "There will always be in the memory of the students who attended chapel services the inspiration of the Christian President, regularly in his place," one former student recalled, "and also in the Episcopal church he never failed to be present in his pew and take part in the services."[290]

Lee was also instrumental in securing funding for the college. Although Lee detested what he characterized as begging for money, he was quite effective in doing so, in no small part due to his heroic status in the South. He secured numerous large donations from prominent

[287] *The Clarion-Ledger* (Jackson, MS), June 17, 1867.
[288] Quoted in Jones, *Personal Reminiscences*, 440.
[289] Lee to Reverend Churchill L. Gibson, January 24, 1866, REL Papers, W&L.
[290] James R. Winchester, "Brief Statement by Lee Alumni," in Riley, ed., *General Robert E. Lee After Appomattox*, 113-14.

individuals, including Shenandoah Valley native Cyrus McCormick, whose donation of $15,000 helped Lee settle the college's large debt and create more professorships to reflect his modernized curriculum.[291] Most reflective of the popularity of Lee's decision to become president was the interest in attending Washington College, which was nearly instantaneous. As prominent southern author and Lee biographer John Esten Cooke argued, "It was the name and example, however, of Lee which proved so valuable, drawing to the college more than five hundred students."[292] The enlarged student body continued throughout his tenure as white southerners, and some northerners desired for their sons to study at a school run by their ideal southerner.

Innumerable letters flooded into Lee's office asking for course catalogues and curricula for high school-aged children as well as former Confederate soldiers who wished to become educated based on their respect for Lee as a commander.[293] Many of the letters seeking admission to Washington College argued that the Civil War had drastically reduced the opportunities for education in the South. Thus, Lee's mere presence at Washington College sparked a renewed interest and perceived facilitation for white southerners to advance intellectually in the wake of defeat. As Mary C. Allen wrote to Lee, "I am as many others broken up by the fate of the war; but still I cannot get my consent to give up the education of my children."[294] Lee's reputation was strong enough that Alice E. N. Wise's son desired to attend

[291] See Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 436-440.
[292] John Esten Cooke, *A Life of Gen. Robert E. Lee* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1871), 470.
[293] Education (usually parent) solicitors: M. Lewis Clarke, Jr. to R.E. Lee, Feb. 19, 1866; C.R. Hubbard to R.E. Lee, Feb. 20, 1866; Jno. O Sullivan to R.E. Lee, April 11, 1866; Aaron H. Pierson to R.E. Lee, May 15, 1866; A.D. Banks to R.E. Lee, June 22, 1866; Thomas D. Wilson, April 3, 1867; Jos. E. Dent to R.E. Lee, July 14, 1868. Soldier letters: A.J. Montgomery, Jr. to R.E. Lee, July 18, 1866; W.A. Wash, July 20, 1866. Mrs. Mary Hardaway wrote, "It was with the greatest pleasure that I learned you had been made to preside over a school rather College in which our young sons of the South may receive a manly education." July 18, 1866. Many more letters with these themes can be found in the REL Papers, W&L.
[294] Mary C. Allen to R.E. Lee, July 18, 1866. REL Papers, W&L.

Washington College despite others guiding him toward Princeton.[295] Frank Magruder was quite forward with his wish to place his son under Lee's "superior instruction."[296]

Even though Lee served as president and did not teach any courses, southerners nevertheless felt that his "superior" presence would trickle down into the classrooms. Lee treated his students as if they were his sons, seemingly molding them in his image for their futures as southern leaders.[297] Lee also instilled the values of a *true gentleman* on his students. Honor, duty, and other traits were prevalent so that Lee could preserve the values of the Old South he held dear. Some letters requested that Lee personally give them "special notice and kind consideration."[298] On numerous occasions at the end of a letter, a sender requested Lee's autograph and other mementos belonging to him.[299]

As his tenure progressed, more southerners took note of and praised what Lee accomplished at Washington College. And, from a purely administrative standpoint, they were correct. White southerners said that Lee made the right choice in his postwar occupation, arguing that he was much more useful by molding the South's "rising generation" than undertaking the occupations of his fellow officers in, business, the railroad industry, for example.[300] The deluge of application letters from around the South demonstrated the wide-reaching effect that Lee's leadership had on the morale of the rebuilding South. Virginians and other white southerners alike praised Lee's efforts as if they were likewise benefitting from the education that young white southerners received, whether they knew the students or not.

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[295] Alice E.N. Wise to R.E. Lee, June 17, 1866. REL Papers, W&L.
[296] Frank Magruder to R.E. Lee, Feb. 20, 1866. REL Papers, W&L.
[297] See Thomas, *Robert E. Lee*, 393-401 for examples.
[298] D.S. Yulee to R.E. Lee, Feb. 20, 1866. REL Papers, W&L
[299] See L. Jervey to R.E. Lee, Feb. 15, 1866, J.P. Branch to R.E. Lee, Feb. 15, 1866, A.S. Buford to R.E. Lee, Feb. 16, 1866, D. Creel to R.E. Lee, Feb. 24, 1866, and S.D. Stuart to R.E. Lee, March 14, 1866. REL Papers, W&L.
[300] "President Lee and Practical Education," *The Galveston Daily News* (Galveston, TX), Oct. 24, 1869.

When they lauded the professors and students at the college, they were actually praising Lee. In an 1867 speech, Col. William Preston Johnston paid a "high tribute" to the character of Washington College students but finished by giving credit to the "personal influence" of Lee.[301] The professors were his "assistants," and Lee was given credit for hiring them.[302] To these people, Lee was the sole teacher and benefactor of the new generation of white southerners. They saw Lee as a success because he molded young men into respectable gentlemen and gave them hope for a bright future. This talent also translated to an increasing comparison of Lee and George Washington. Just as Washington had helped the college flourish with his monetary contributions, so, too, had Lee reestablished a quality institution for educating the young men of the South.[303] As a result, the mother of a students wrote to Lee and assured him that he and Washington were "equally beloved and venerated by us all."[304]

Although education was not readily available for everyone in the South, Gaines Foster argues schools played an important role in preserving the southern narrative of the Civil War and postwar era. For example, the Confederate Home School in Charleston, South Carolina, was founded shortly after the war by a group of local women. There they educated women on how to train the southern youth and to be mothers who would instill in their children a "just pride in their descent from the Confederate soldier" while revering heroes like Jackson and Lee.[305] While Lee did not necessarily go that far, he certainly instituted values of the Old South, beginning with the students the college accepted.

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[301] "Commencement night at Washington College," *The Daily Journal* (Wilmington, NC), June 26, 1867.
[302] "President Lee and Practical Education," *The Galveston Daily News* (Galveston, TX), Oct. 24, 1869.
[303] See Crenshaw, *General Lee's College*, 26.
[304] Moger, "Letters to Lee," 63.
[305] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 48.

Lee held reservations about the makeup of the student body. Adhering to his elitist upbringing and background, he believed that higher education at Washington College, and in the South, was reserved for the upper classes. As he put it,

> … this character of instruction is required by the few; men of high capacity…not for the many…for the industrial classes, who have neither the time nor the opportunity for acquiring it. In this way, by raising the tone of society, the character of the people, that standards of education at the college of the country, would perform its part.[306]

Lee's words obviously exhibit his general acceptance of the divide between college-educated southern youth and those of what Lee termed the "industrial classes," indicating an adherence to antebellum hierarchy. Although Lee privately belittled the lower classes of the South, the southerners who paid attention to his work at Washington College saw only a man willing to sacrifice his old age for the betterment of the South as a whole.

Lee's role as a college president was widely referenced during the final years of his life, eulogies to him, and after his death. While white southerners pointed to his excellent reputation on the battlefield during the Civil War and his piety, they largely remembered his dedication to their own reconstruction of the South. Lee's military record was not as important because white southerners could no longer win the war on the battlefield. The education and molding of the young men of the South were the direst necessities in the minds of most white southerners. As Phillip Van Doren Stern wrote, "What Lee did on the field…made him famous, but what he did afterwards in civilian life made him great."[307] He failed to deliver the South's independence. So, he did the next best thing: he created opportunity for future generations to flourish while continuing the values of the antebellum South.

[306] Letter from Lee to John B. Baldwin, Lexington, December 15, 1865, Lee Family Papers, VHS.
[307] Quotation found in Hassler, "Robert E. Lee: The Educator," 507.

"The day is not distant when all citizens of this great Republic will unite in claiming Lee as their own"[308]: Lee, Monuments, and the Lost Cause in the 1880s

As his train pulled into the station on April 7, 1870, hundreds of supporters thrust forward to catch a glimpse of Robert E. Lee, their almost-savior. Word of Lee's arrival were on the lips of every citizen in Charlotte, North Carolina, and more than one of them ventured to the train station early to confirm Lee would be on the next train. Receiving the affirmation, word spread to friends and families, and soon a large crowd welcomed the frail general to their town. When Lee stepped off the train, a local band struck up "Hail to the Chief," and excited murmurs emanated from the crowd. Shouts began as the people wished to hear Lee speak. Giving in, Lee thanked them for their hospitality while accepting a bouquet given to him on behalf of the citizens and Confederate veterans present.[309] He surely appreciated the outpouring of love, but Lee was also put off by the excessive pageantry and excitement on a journey that was supposed to help him recover from the stresses that accompanied his position as president of Washington College.

In the final months before his death, Lee's fatigue hit its peak; his short walk from the chapel on the campus to his house was so arduous that he frequently stopped to rest. Although he considered resigning, his doctor recommended he take a short leave. Accordingly, Lee and his daughter, Agnes, travelled throughout the South on a tour that took him as far as Savannah. Lee was greeted by thousands of adoring southerners, some took the opportunity to welcome him into their homes. One woman recalled Lee's visit: "I can only remember the great dignity and kindness of General Lee's bearing…We regarded him with the greatest veneration. We had

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[308] Quotation from Charles Erasmus Fenner, *Ceremonies Connected with the Unveiling of the Statue of General Robert E. Lee, at Lee Circle, New Orleans, La., Feb. 22, 1884* (New Orleans: W. B. Stansbury, 1884), 40.
[309] See "State News," *Wilmington Journal* (Wilmington, NC), April 8, 1870, originally printed in *Charlotte Observer*.

heard of God, but here was General Lee!"[310] Even as he relaxed in his lodging, Agnes was forced to turn away dozens of visitors and well-wishers who called upon Lee nearly non-stop. Welcomed by all, United States soldiers sent fruit to Lee's train in admiration of the general and many African Americans citizens called upon him as a sign of respect.[311]

However, Lee did not make a positive impact upon everyone he came into contact with. During his southern tour, former Confederate General John S. Mosby ran into Lee in Richmond, and they exchanged pleasantries, as Mosby had seen Lee only infrequently since the war ended. Mosby soon after saw George Pickett, whose division was all but destroyed in the failed attack on the third day at Gettysburg. Pickett was a rarity from the Confederate military: he was one of Lee's "enemies," or as close to an enemy as one could find. His bitterness towards Lee stemmed from the Pennsylvania defeat and an incident at the Battle of Five Forks eight days before the surrender at Appomattox. Pickett left his headquarters to attend a nearby fish-bake. While he was out, the Union launched an assault upon his position which ended in disaster. In response, Lee allegedly sent an order relieving Pickett of his command, although there is no official documentation of the removal.[312]

Pickett apparently did not receive the order, as he later rode forward toward the battle. Lee was known to refer to officers by name and rank if he knew them. Instead, he turned to his aide, Colonel Charles Venable, and sneered "Is that man still with this army?" Pickett, having not seen Lee since that day, told Mosby that if he would go with him, Pickett would pay his

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[310] Quotation in Dowdey, *Lee*, 725.

[311] Soldier respect taken from Agnes Lee letter in Thomas, *Robert E. Lee*, 407. For more context on African Americans visiting Lee, see "Tribute Paid to General Lee," *Public Ledger* (Memphis, TN), April 6, 1870. For a more complete summary of Lee's southern tour, see Thomas, 407-409. See also "General Lee's Health," *Richmond Dispatch*, April 26, 1870; "Arrival of Gen. Robert E. Lee," *Wilmington Journal*, May 6, 1870, among other newspapers.

[312] For more, see William Marvel, *Lee's Last Retreat: The Flight to Appomattox* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 214-217. Longstreet makes no mention of Pickett in his post-battle report, a blatant error if Pickett had been officially relieved of command. Nevertheless, Pickett commanded troops during the surrender at Appomattox.

respects to Lee, but he did not want to be alone with him.[313] Lee was less than pleased to see Pickett and met him with an icy stare, which Pickett returned, immediately regretting the urge to greet his former commander. Sensing the tension in the room, Mosby rose to his feet, and Lee and Pickett quickly followed. The two men exchanged brief farewells, and Pickett angrily cursed "that old man" who "had my division slaughtered at Gettysburg."[314] This instance involving Pickett and Lee was extremely rare after the war. Most of his officers did not harbor ill-will towards Lee, and even fewer would likely have said so even if they did due to his popularity.

Despite Pickett's outburst, the trip was a productive one in reaffirming Lee's place as a hero of the South. And although the nearly two-month journey was much more tiring than anticipated, Lee must have appreciated the enormous level of admiration he experienced.[315] Crowds cheered him wherever he went. So much food was brought to their train car and lodgings that Agnes thought they might die from overeating.[316] She wrote to her mother, "I wish you could travel with Papa, to see the affection & feeling shown toward him everywhere."[317] At Columbia, South Carolina, Lee was asked to speak, but he did not understand why so many people wanted to see him. "Why should they care to see me?" he asked Colonel Alexander Haskell. "I am only a poor old Confederate."[318] Whether it was genuine curiosity or humility, Lee could not quite grasp the profound effect he had had on the white South. He had led them

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[313] Colonel John S. Mosby, "Personal Recollections of General Lee," *Munsey's Magazine*, Vol. 45 (Apr.-Sept. 1911): 68-9. Quotation taken from page 69 of that article in a postwar conversation with Charles Venable. More information can also be found in Flood, *Lee: The Last Years*, 231.
[314] Mosby. "Personal Recollections of General Lee," 69. See Flood, *Lee: The Last Years*, for a longer analysis.
[315] Lee was typically averse to pageantry or the celebration of his memory, as evidenced in his reluctance to speak publicly during his southern tour. Even when alone, Lee disliked outward affection towards him. One day during his presidency at Washington College, Lee was out for a ride on his horse, Traveller. A veteran of the Army of Northern Virginia saw Lee and approached him. He was so proud to have met Lee that he wanted to let out a cheer for him. Lee, naturally, told him it would not be necessary, especially considering they were the only ones in the forest. The veteran insisted, and he rode off shouting "Hurrah for General Lee! Hurrah for General Lee!" See Flood, *Lee: The Last Years*, 110.
[316] Sanborn, *Lee: The Complete Man*, 2:355.
[317] Letter from Agnes to Mary Custis Lee, April 3, 1870, Lee Family Papers, VHS.
[318] Sanborn, *Lee: The Complete Man*, 2:355.

through war and helped educate the new generation of southern youth. They had every reason to cheer him.

Just a few months after he finished his tour in the summer of 1870, Lee died. He had been in ill health, and the break from Washington College was supposed to have helped his condition. There is no way of knowing if it worsened his health, but the excitement and pageantry likely took a heavy toll on Lee. In the wake of his death, future leaders of the Lost Cause movement began to systematically alter Lee's memory to fit their agenda of retelling the narrative of the Civil War on the South's terms. Elements of Lee's personality, his accomplishments and deeds, and evens stories surrounding certain events in his life were embellished to the point that they became mythical tales that exhibited tones of heroism and honor. These mythical tales and qualities painted Lee as the ideal southerner – a man who fought for the righteous cause and educated the young men of the South. But after his death, former colleagues quickly engineered the new memory of Lee as the epitome of southern culture and honor. To them, any society that produced a man such as Lee, at least the hyperbolic Lee they created after his death, had to be right.[319] From that point on, Lost Cause rhetoricians recreated Lee's image, and to criticize Lee after his death, and by association the Lost Cause and the South, was akin to blasphemy.

Even the circumstances surrounding his death were altered to fit the narrative of a noble Lee. In the two or so weeks before he died, Lee became unable to sustain prolonged speech and was relegated to utterances of no more than a few words. He mostly communicated by shaking his head, nodding, or conveying his emotions through his eyes. As Mary Lee recalled just days after his death, "He did not speak except a few words occasionally…"[320] In 1875, Lost Cause advocate William Preston Johnston, son of former Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston,

[319] See Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 301 and Connelly, *The Marble Man*, 94.
[320] Mary Anna Lee to Mary Meade, October 12, 1870 in "Funeral of Mrs. G. W. P. Custis and Death of General R. E. Lee," in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 35 (1927): 24.

asserted that the day before he died, Lee said "Tell [A.P.] Hill he *must* come up!" and that at the time of his death, he said "Strike the tent."[321] Modern medical professionals consider the idea to be preposterous, as the effects of a stroke would have rendered him nearly speechless.[322]

Johnston's account remained the only prominent account of Lee's death for years until his daughter, Mildred, wrote about the event in 1888. She discredits Johnston's account by writing that he "became mute" and "his lips never uttered a sound! The silence was awful!"[323] However, Lee's last words, according to Johnston, were etched in the minds of southerners for decades. Douglas Southall Freeman even used Johnston's version over Mary's and Mildred Lee's accounts. Instead of the feeble, nearly mute Lee, Johnston portrays Lee's final moments as if he were back in the service of the Confederate army similar to Stonewall Jackson's last moments. Lee died fighting for the independence of white southerners, if only in his mind.

The people of the South expressed their devastation over the loss of their beloved general, while some in the North treated Lee with a sense of respect as a military man and a misguided American. "Death had entered the Southern home and bereaved the South, the nation, and the world of a citizen," wailed one former Confederate officer, "perhaps the purest, noblest and most illustrious personage, at least of modern times."[324] Lee's nephew, Edward Lee Childe, was so distraught that he was initially unable to bring himself to write a letter of condolence to his aunt Mary.[325]

Most northern newspapers took a neutral stance towards Lee. Although they consistently associated him with the Confederacy, they also treated him with a modicum of respect as a

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[321] William Preston Johnston, "Death of General Lee," in Jones, *Personal Reminiscences,* 451.
[322] Marvin P. Rozear, E. Wayne Massey, Jennifer Horner, Erin Foley, and Joseph C. Greenfield, Jr., "R. E. Lee's Stroke," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 98, no. 2 (Apr. 1990): 291-308.
[323] Mildred Childe Lee, "My Recollections of My Father's Death," August 21, 1888, in Eleanor Agnes Lee Journal, VHS.
[324] Col. Daniel McGill, *Eulogy on the Life and Character of Gen. Rob't Edward Lee* (Bainbridge, GA: Wm. C. Jones, Printer, 1871), 3.
[325] Letter from Blanche Lee (de Trigueti) Childe to Mary Lee, October 18, 1870. Lee Family Papers. VHS.

general and a man who spent the last years of his life trying to rebuild the shattered South.[326] For one newspaper, he was "an able man engaged in a mistaken cause."[327] The Philadelphia *Evening Telegraph* wrote that the "passionate feelings" stemming from the rebellion have mostly left the "loyal North," and "there is a general disposition to dwell rather upon his personal virtues than to follow him to the grave with denunciations."[328] It is possible that Lee's desire for reconciliation prevented his memory from being largely criticized by northern media. The *New York Herald* had possibly one of the most positive obituaries of Lee when an article argued that the United States "lost a son in whom [the nation] well be proud." He was as close to an ideal soldier and Christian as "any man we can think of," and "had occasion required it, General Lee would have given to the United States the benefit of all his great talents…had he lived a few years longer."[329] For these northerners, Lee's death signaled the end of this vilification. He crossed over into legend as an American, not a rebel. This theme became more prevalent in the later 1870s and 1880s when the southerners who established monuments to Lee spoke often about his "American-ness."

However, there were some who castigated Lee. The *Titusville Herald* of Pennsylvania wrote that "Lee was not the General popular opinion declared him. Had he been, the Confederacy would now be a reality, or the war a permanence."[330] One newspaper also argued that "those most true to his memory" should regret that he did not die ten years prior, before his "previous fair fame had been with rebellion."[331] Several newspapers also lauded the actions of Collector Robb of Savannah, Georgia. The custom house there lowered the United States flag to

[326] See New York *Herald* and Philadelphia *North American* articles from *Wilmington Journal*, Oct. 21, 1870.
[327] "General Robert E. Lee," *Valley Spirit* (Chambersburg, PA), October 19, 1870.
[328] "Robert E. Lee," *The Evening Telegraph* (Philadelphia, PA), October 13, 1870.
[329] "Sketch of Robert Edmund [*sic*] Lee," New York *Herald*, October 13, 1870.
[330] "Robert E. Lee," *The Titusville Herald* (Titusville, PA), October 21, 1870.
[331] "Death of General Robert E. Lee," *The Tiffin Tribune* (Tiffin, OH), October 20, 1870.

half mast to mourn Robert E. Lee. Robb, however, countermanded that order and rebuked those responsible. Supposedly, he tied the halliards in a hard knot to prevent anyone else from interfering with the flag.[332] As he was a federal appointee, it is not surprising that Robb took this action. As there were no other reported instances of lowering the flag, this singular episode indicated a general consensus of the respect for Lee.

Southern newspapers memorialized Lee as the noble, Christian leader of the Army of Northern Virginia. In order to maintain composure in the midst of such an emotionally devastating loss, white southerners were told to look toward their eventual deaths with pride and even excitement. They would then be reunited not only with their loved ones, but with Lee and Washington to guide them into the afterlife. "Into that blessed company to which the Christian General has gone you will soon follow…for there you will know his spirit, and with him see the spirits of Lee and of Washington."[333] Some also told white southerners to remember the nobleness of the cause and to be proud of their men who "moulder [*sic*] in the trenches of Northern Virginia."[334]

The *Southern Collegian*, Washington College's student newspaper, described the death notice of Lee as "the saddest announcement which our pen ever wrote."[335] They subsequently published a series of articles calling for the construction of a physical memorial to Lee on the college grounds.[336] Although this was not realized until the 1880s due to budget constraints, immediate memorialization was on the minds of many. In the meantime, however, the general's

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[332] See "The Man for the Place," *Selma Dollar Times* (reprint from *St. Louis Republican*), October 22, 1870; "Very Small Indeed," *Valley Spirit* (Chambersburg, PA), October 19, 1870; "Honors to Traitors," *The Evening Telegraph* (Philadelphia, PA), October 20, 1870; "The Death of General Lee," *Buffalo Morning Express and Illustrated Buffalo Express,* October 14, 1870.
[333] Quotation from "Lee Rests," *The Galveston Daily News* (Galveston, TX), October 18, 1870. Washington and Lee. See also "General Lee: Magni Mortis Umbra," *Wilmington Journal* (Wilmington, NC), October 21, 1870.
[334] "In Memory of the Death of Robert E. Lee," *The Galveston Daily News*, October 18, 1870.
[335] "The Death of Gen. Lee," *Southern Collegian*, vol. 3, no. 1, October 15, 1870. W&L.
[336] See *Southern Collegian*, vol. 3, no. 3, November 12, 1870; vol. 3, no. 4, November 26, 1870. W&L.

remains were stored under the chapel built by Lee beneath a large slab of marble. A memorial area was set up beneath the chapel that housed numerous items belonging or relating to Lee, such as his desk and chair, a bronze statue of Lee donated from a benefactor in New York, and a painting of Lee and Jackson from New Orleans. In the ensuing months after Lee's death, the memorial area was filled with handwritten notes and flowers laid by grieving southerners.[337]

Some states elected to endow professorships in subject areas Lee introduced to Washington College. Missouri citizens, for example, pledged to fund a professorship of applied chemistry.[338] Groups of Confederate veterans throughout the South expressed their grief in official statements during regularly-held meetings.[339] Louisville citizens passed measures to "officially" recognize the chastity and godliness of Lee. They framed these resolutions as mediation between the still-sensitive North-South tensions after the war.[340] The Kentuckians took it upon themselves as the geographic center of the Civil War to act as the mediatory center of the postwar memory of Lee and the Civil War.

Lee's death profoundly affected the white South. Gone was the stalwart of antebellum values and the man who had helped lead them through part of the transition into the New South. The next logical step for the white South was to use Lee's memory as a pillar of the Lost Cause that his comments and writing had helped begin. Mary Custis Lee readily fed into this by calling Lee "the Hero of a lost cause" in a letter to a friend.[341] Preachers, such as Randolph H. McKim, tried to lessen the blow by arguing that Lee "Fate[d] to fail in his Titanic effort…but in spite of

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[337] See "The Tomb of Lee," *Southern Collegian*, vol. 4, no. 3, November 26, 1870. W&L.
[338] Originally from St. Louis *Dispatch*, republished in *Southern Collegian*, vol. 3, no. 4, November 12, 1870.
[339] For examples of eulogies to Lee, see "Funeral Ceremonies of General Robert Edward Lee at Lexington, VA.," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, vol. 31, no. 788 (Nov. 5, 1870): n.p.; Daniel McGill, *Eulogy on the Life and Character of Gen. Rob't Edward Lee* (Bainbridge, GA: n.p., 1871).
[340] *Robert E. Lee. In Memoriam. A Tribute of Respect Offered by the Citizens of Louisville* (Louisville: John P. Morton and Company, 1870). This source was created by a committee of seven ex-Confederate soldiers that collected and published "in appropriate form" various tributes to Lee by the citizens of Louisville, KY. In the process of
[341] Mary Custis Lee to "My dear Lettie," November 15, 1870. Found in Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 465.

failure – yes by reason of his failure, rising to a height of moral grandeur never reached by any other American."[342]

If the printed works of the 1860s were more biographical, with a touch of fantasy, the narratives published beginning in the 1870s became more fanciful, as authors began to take more liberties with their work in order to increase Lee's fame and reputation. Authors such as John Esten Cooke and J. William Jones willingly utilized stories and reminiscences that may or may not have had any basis in reality. Cooke's biography of Lee perpetuated idea that Lee received numerous employment offers in the postwar period, as well as estates in England and Ireland. Elizabeth Brown Pryor argues that Lee was meticulous in his letter responses, and those ideas never appeared in his correspondence.[343] Probably, this was simply added into Cooke's book because it made for a good story; Lee was so renowned around the world that other countries offered him estates just to live there. Jones's *Personal Reminiscences, Anecdotes, and Letters of Gen. Robert E. Lee* also perpetuated a fantastical memory of Lee made up largely of remembrances from old colleagues and acquaintances. He wrote that Lee donated one hundred dollars to the education of soldiers' orphans, one hundred dollars to the Young Men's Christian Association, and smaller sums for other purposes in the last twelve months of his life. These stories are unverified, but printed as if they were fact because Jones "happen[ed] to know."[344]

One important aspect of these narratives and the rhetoric often used in Lost Cause speeches and writing is that their fantastical image of Lee was rooted in fact. They may have over-emphasized the argument, but this is rooted in Lee's factual reputation as a skilled commander. Their image of him as having traits no other man could possibly possess stemmed

[342] "Address of Rev. Randolph Harrison McKim," in T. R. B. Wright, ed. *Westmoreland County Virginia…A Short Chapter and Bright Day in its History* (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, Printers, 1912), 33.
[343] See Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 436-440.
[344] J. William Jones, "His Christian Character," in Jones, *Personal Reminiscences*, 432.

from his devout religious nature and sense of duty and honor in war and in educating southern youth. During the war, white southerners believed that he and God were inherently connected in fighting for southern independence. As Pryor argues, "Divine Will, and Lee, and Victory became a kind of trinity."[345] He strived to ensure that the young men at Washington College always conducted themselves in the same honorable vein as southern gentlemen. Although the claims made above by Jones are unverifiable, they touch upon these key themes of Lee's memory: the care of the families of his soldiers and the promotion of Christianity among his students at Washington College. Furthermore, his adherence to the values of the Old South served as a connection between the Old and New South for whites. By remembering Lee on their own terms, they idealized the past and resisted reality.[346] As such, the mythical Lee was not conjured out of thin air, but his post-death memory was a heavily embellished version of his actual traits.

Importantly, some of the biographies and reminiscences were written by white women of the South. They helped the Confederacy numerous ways during the Civil War and were prominent in memorializing the Confederacy afterwards. Written works were but one way they could honor their male heroes. Although many of the books praising former Confederates emerged in the late nineteenth century, there were a handful written soon after the war ended. Emily Virginia Mason's *Popular Life of Gen. Robert Edward Lee* was published with the permission of Mary Lee. Mason proclaimed that although her first book was "unpractised [*sic*]," it was an effort to provide the true history of Lee.[347] She also perpetuated the link between the American Revolution and the Confederate cause and Washington and Lee that began in the 1860s. In describing Lee's acceptance of the presidency of Washington College, she stated, "It is remarkable that the institution which enjoyed the munificence and inherited the name of the hero

[345] Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 239.
[346] Ibid., 468.
[347] Emily Virginia Mason, *Popular Life of Gen. Robert Edward Lee* (Baltimore: J. Murphy & Co., 1872), iii.

of the first American Revolution should have opened its arms to receive…the foremost man of the second."[348]

One aspect that set female-authored biographies of Lee apart from their male counterparts is that they occasionally criticized Lee. Take, for example, Judith W. McGuire's recounting of Lee abandoning Richmond in April 1865. She criticized Lee leaving the city to be captured by Union troops, arguing that the subsequent occupation was "humiliating to the extreme," but also noting that their occupiers were courteous. "But where was our great Chief from whom we still expected so much," McGuire inquires in her published book about Lee's life.[349] These personal associations with Lee's life leads one to understand how important he was to the southern populace. McGuire did not write these critical comments in her diary, but in a book published in the north and presumably read by thousands across the country. The female criticism was unique from the male perspective because the women were the ones who were typically occupied and subjected to Union control during the war. While white southern men suffered from poor supplies, clothing, and near-starvation, they could at least look to Lee riding through their camp as a symbol of hope. For women, especially Richmond women like McGuire, Lee's abandonment of the city felt no different than an abandonment of them.

One of the more prominent traits of Lee present in the litany of biographies and reminiscences was his compassion for northern and southern civilians. Lee's Christian humanity was sometimes juxtaposed against the devastation wrought by Sherman in his March to the Sea. As one soldier lauded, Lee's "Christian and humane effort to mitigate the horrors of war confers greater glory on [him] than all the villages, towns, cities and private residences burnt by Sherman

[348] Mason, *Popular Life*, 351.
[349] Judith W. McGuire, *General Robert E. Lee, the Christian Soldier* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1873), 151-152.

and his cruel followers can ever reflect upon his dishonored name."[350] At other times, it was the compassion he held for his soldiers. While it is generally accepted that Lee did not wish to prolong the conflict via guerrilla warfare, a recollection by General William N. Pendleton indicated that at the end of the war, Lee was willing to sacrifice himself and his men for the good of the cause. In a meeting with his generals, Pendleton recounted that a group of generals met in the early hours of April 7 with the belief that their situation was hopeless and a continued fight was senseless and only served to kill more young southern men. Lee responded by arguing that although he never believed the South would win the war without international assistance, "I [shall] die first, and…if it comes to that, we shall force through [Grant's army], or all fall in our places."[351] Although Pendleton meant this story to be an example of Lee's tenacity, it certainly demonstrates the conflict felt within himself at the end of the war. He wanted more than anything to win independence for his state, but he also knew that the war was over, and he needed to help the South in another way.

In the absence of Lee, white southerners took it upon themselves to reshape his image and memory to fit their own needs. Lee was no longer there to give his advice. So, they determined it necessary to consider what Lee may have said or thought, and they elevated it further. Instead of a beloved general and educator of men, Lee became what Connelly called "a God figure for Virginians, a saint for the white Protestant South, and a hero for the nation."[352] Lost Cause leaders created an image of an infallible Lee, and they also took offense at anyone who threatened that image. This came in many forms: blaming Jackson for his failures during the Seven Days' Battles and Longstreet for defeat at Gettysburg, while criticizing Joseph E.

[350] John Hampden Chamberlyne, "Address on the Character of Gen. R. E. Lee," *SHSP*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Jan.-June 1877): 28-37.
[351] "Interesting facts in General Lee's History," *Staunton Spectator*, February 7, 1871.
[352] Connelly, *The Marble Man*, 3.

Johnston for his failures in independent command. All of these stemmed from one common source: devotion to Lee's memory and an unwillingness to accept challenges to an image of victory in the postwar South.[353]

Concurrently, prominent Lost Cause authors wove Lee into their narratives of the legality and righteousness of secession and the Confederacy. Authors like Jubal A. Early and Albert Taylor Bledsoe often utilized Lee as a pawn to advance their pro-Confederate agenda. Early was especially effective since he was elected president of the Southern Historical Society in 1873. Early issues of the *Southern Historical Society Papers* are riddled with Early's pro-Confederate rhetoric, although he is certainly not the only author peddling myths in those pages. One article in 1881 tracing Lee's lineage to Scottish King Robert the Bruce proclaimed that Lee "was in himself the peer of any Lord, or King, or noble civilian the world ever saw."[354] The veneration of the mythical Lee was wholly self-serving. White southerners elevated Lee's memory to a mythical level in order to legitimize secession and the history and memory of the Confederacy.

Jubal Early was a rather mediocre officer under Lee's command. In fact, Lee removed him from independent command near the end of the war. But he remained determined to keep the cause of the South alive, and Lee played an integral part in that objective. Twelve days after Lee died, he called a meeting of former veteran officers of the Army of Northern Virginia in Lynchburg. Angered that they had been left out of the memorial exercises for Lee after his death, Early vowed to honor Lee in a way that benefitted the wellbeing of the entire South. Early told the group that they needed to make a concerted effort to memorialize Lee because "we owe it to our fallen comrades, to ourselves, and to posterity, by some suitable and lasting memorial…that we were not unworthy to be led by our immortal chief, and [are] not now ashamed of the

[353] Ibid., 3.
[354] William Winston Fontaine, "Did General R. E. Lee Descend from Robert, The Bruce King of Scotland?" *SHSP* Vol. 10 (Jan.-Dec. 1881), 190.

principles for which Lee fought."[355] Although it appeared that Early's motivations stemmed from honoring Lee, Fellman argues that Early instead "planned to serve the ends of Jubal Early, the slain soldiers, their survivors, and their children by converting the dead Lee into the most ubiquitous Confederate war memorial."[356]

Early and other Lee devotees utilized the three key themes that surrounded Lee when he was alive: the noble Christian soldier, the heir to George Washington, and the educator of southern youth. These themes easily took hold among white southerners, as the two former had been present in their minds during the Civil War, and the latter was more recent. In his 1874 address, Georgia Senator Benjamin Hill perpetuated many of the traits for which Lee had come to be known after his death. He declared,

> He was a foe without hate; a friend without treachery; a soldier without cruelty; a victor without oppression, and a victim without murmuring. He was a public officer without vices; a private citizen without wrong; a neighbor without reproach; a Christian without hypocrisy, and a man without guile. He was a Caesar, without his ambition; Frederick, without his tyranny; Napoleon, without his selfishness, and Washington, without his reward.[357]

As one soldier stated in an 1875 speech, "The grandest thing in all the world to us [was] when he loved us like a father and led us like a king, when we trusted him like a providence and obeyed him like a god."[358] An orator at a Confederate veteran meeting in Richmond proclaimed that Lee was "so blameless as might become a Saint."[359] In 1872, the editor of the *Southern Magazine* wrote "we consider Robert Edward Lee as…the noblest type of manhood this age has produced."[360] While John M. Taylor claims that the "modest" Lee would have been "appalled at

[355] Address of J. A. Early to the Surviving Officers of the Army of Northern Virginia, Lynchburg, October 24, 1870, in Jones, *Personal Reminiscences*, 334.
[356] Fellman, *The Making of Robert E. Lee*, 303.
[357] Hill quotation found in Jones, *Personal Reminiscences*, 233.
[358] Quotation is from Robert Stiles, "Address Delivered Before Washington and Lee University," *Southern Magazine*, Vol. 16 (March 1875): 42.
[359] Chamberlayne, "Address," 31.
[360] "Editor's Comment," *Southern Magazine*, Vol. 3 (January 1872), 122.

his canonization" after this death, several other historians disagree.[361] Pryor further elaborates that the "aggressive defense" of the Lost Cause era, placing monuments, well-written battlefield dramas, and well-manufactured popular perceptions of the Civil War and Lee, would have been akin to many of Lee's military successes.[362]

When Lee was alive, his followers did not organize the memorial associations that were so prevalent in the 1870s and onward. The reasons were two-fold; Lee would likely have declined such remembrances (like he had with the Gettysburg invitation), and the sponsors were not willing to disagree with him publicly on the matter. Gaines M. Foster convincingly explained that upon Lee's death, some of his followers exploited his memory because he could no longer protest the ways in which southerners remembered him. As Foster writes, "A dead and perfect Lee, of course, made a more useful hero than a live and perfect one. From the grave he was no longer able…to discourage Confederate activity or mar the images made of him."[363]

After Lee's death, these Lost Cause rhetoricians, most prominently Early, read and listened to Lee's original arguments regarding the disparity in numbers among the Union and Confederate armies and took it to new heights. They oftentimes reassessed which units were under the command of which officer. If that officer was a direct subordinate of Lee, these authors tended to deflate the number of men in Lee's army to make his victories seem more legendary and to strengthen the Lost Cause rhetoric that the Confederacy lost because they were simply overwhelmed by superior numbers.[364]

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[361] Taylor, *Duty Faithfully Performed*, 229.
[362] Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 469.
[363] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 52.
[364] Albert Taylor Bledsoe, *Is Davis a Traitor? Or, Was Secession a Constitutional Right to the War of 1861?* (Baltimore: Innes & Company, 1866); Numerous articles are found in the *Southern Historical Society Papers*. For other examples, see Charles Marshall, Joseph Eggleston Johnston, and Jubal Early, "Strength of Lee's Army in the Seven Days Battles," *SHSP*, vol. 1 (Jan.-June 1876): 407-24; Jubal Anderson Early, "The Relative Strength of the Armies of Genl's Lee and Grant," *SHSP*, vol. 2, no. 1 (July-Dec. 1876): 6-21; R. G. H. Kean, et. al., "Resources of the Confederacy in February, 1865," *SHSP*, vol. 2, no. 1 (July-Dec. 1876): 56-63, no. 2: 85-105, no. 3: 113-128; vol.

Early became enamored with producing the "true narrative" of the war based on Lee's original comment regarding the disparity in numbers between the armies. Not satisfied with accepting defeat, Early sought to clarify the narrative, when in reality his actions were more akin to producing outright falsehoods and badgering. The *London Standard* published an article in 1870 containing supposed "gross errors" in reporting the strength of the armies in an 1864 campaign around the Rapidan and James Rivers in Virginia. In a letter to the newspaper, Early protested that "a people overpowered and crushed in a struggle for their rights" wished to correct "a persistent and systematic effort to falsify the truth of history…by the adherents of the United States Government."[365] In just a few sentences, Early established and perpetuated the oft-used rhetoric of defeat by overwhelming numbers and victimization in the form of the North supposedly lying about army strengths. Although Gallagher argues that Early's refutation of the numbers is accurate when "stripped of hyperbole and antinorthern rhetoric," it does not change the fact that Early and other southerners knowingly created a bastardization of the historical narrative based on the Confederate vision of the Lost Cause. [366]

Gettysburg was an important pillar of Lee's image. Early and other Lost Cause proponents seized upon the battle because it offered an additional reason for Confederate defeat outside of the numbers argument. Following his death, virtually no one dared to question Lee's culpability in the loss because the idea of tarnishing his memory was inexcusable. James Longstreet made himself an easy target for Lost Cause rhetoricians when he questioned and even blamed Lee for the loss after the war. Longstreet had also become a Republican, which earned him ire throughout the South. Not only had he implied Lee was less than perfect, they felt he had

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3, no. 3 (Jan.-June 1877): 97-111; Colonel William Allan, "Gen. Lee's Strength and Losses at Petersburg," *SHSP*, vol. 4, no. 1 (July-Dec. 1877): 34-41; Walter H. Taylor, "Memorandum by Colonel Walter H. Taylor, of General Lee's Staff," *SHSP*, vol. 4, no. 2 (July-Dec. 1877): 80-87.

[365] Early, "The Relative Strength…," 6-21.

[366] Gallagher, *Lee & His Army in Confederate History*, 259.

betrayed the South by allying with the political party that had supposedly started the Civil War.[367]

As a result, Longstreet was attacked on all sides by Lee supporters in order to lessen Longstreet's credibility and increase Lee's reputation. In an 1872 address at Washington and Lee, Early argued that Longstreet's delay on July 2 in attacking the Round Tops cost the Confederacy the victory since the hills were not occupied by the Union until that afternoon. He also argued that Longstreet "did not enter upon the execution of his plans with that confidence and faith necessary to success."[368] William N. Pendleton took up the mantle after Early and claimed to friends that Longstreet "lost us a victory that would have definitely established our independence." Fitzhugh Lee later wrote that if Longstreet would not have delayed, "the historic 'rebel yell' of triumph would have resounded…might have been heard and heeded around the halls of Washington."[369] Foster argues that attacking Longstreet afforded white southerners a luxury they did not have with the numbers argument: by blaming Longstreet, they were able to indicate that success had been possible and their cause not inevitably unsustainable.

Soldier remembrances were prevalent throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Printing presses worked tirelessly to distribute memoirs and recollections of former soldiers that typically explained their service in the military in lucid detail. Publications like the *Southern Historical Society Papers* and the *Confederate Veteran* (1893) served as perfect venues by which subscribers could read anecdotes, analyses, and recollections about their favorite Confederate heroes. Lee was quite possibly the most common subject in these publications, and most soldier recollections mention and venerate him in some fashion. There were only a few true outliers that

[367] See Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 58.
[368] Early, *The Campaigns of Robert E. Lee*, 30-32.
[369] All quoted in Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 58.

criticized Lee, and those typically stemmed from a purely military standpoint. Rarely, if ever, did former soldiers argue that Lee was a poor leader for the New South.

Like southern women, soldiers injected Lee into their stories to make themselves seem more important to the cause. Moreover, soldiers' routinely argued amongst each other regarding who interacted with Lee or who helped him in certain ways. Two prominent examples occurred in postwar reminiscences of the battles at Spotsylvania Courthouse and the Wilderness. Lee, among other generals, had a penchant for riding up towards the front lines when the fighting got intense. The reasons for this varied from inspiring the troops to simply getting a better view or negating the need for messages being delivered via courier. These two battles featured instances of Lee riding dangerously close to the front lines, and his soldiers actively prevented him from going any farther because of their fear of his death. In the 1880s, two different stories regarding "Lee to the rear!" appeared in southern publications, and more soldiers and stories appeared in print throughout the next several decades. Not only did these tales help perpetuate Lee's bravery and dedication to his men, but the soldiers also fought over who had sent Lee to the rear thus saving him and earning them respect amongst their former comrades. In a way, their roles in protecting Lee served as a badge of honor they could wear for the rest of their lives.

Although the earliest recorded memories of the "Lee to the rear" anecdote appeared in private correspondence in late 1865, they did not become a part of popular southern memory until they were recounted in an 1880 article from the *Southern Historical Society Papers*.[370] Written by noted Lee scholar and orator J. William Jones, the piece was meant to highlight the love Lee's men had for him, which fell in line with most articles written about Lee after his death. Although they were reproduced and supported by multiple former soldiers, albeit with

[370] One of the earliest instances appears in a letter from John Mason Thompson to Robert E. Lee detailing the "Lee to the rear" incident at the Wilderness and asking Lee to confirm his memory, Dec. 4, 1865, in Mason, *Popular Life*, 244-45.

some minor changes such as who "saved" Lee, they are somewhat fantastical in their nature, which leads one to question the absolute authenticity. Were these simply more stories in the Lee legend?

Whenever Lee rode through the ranks of his army, he was invariably greeted by cheers and shouts from his soldiers who derived their inner strength from the greatness that they believed he exuded. As such, they refused to see him venture into harm's way and earnestly prevented it whenever possible. These actions accordingly affected Lee. A former soldier recollected that one of Lee's sons met him at the unveiling of the Richmond monument to Lee in 1890 and relayed that remembering the protective actions of his soldiers brought tears to Lee's eyes.[371] The following are summaries of the battles and postwar reminiscences of "Lee to the rear."

On May 6, 1864, the Army of the Potomac made a furious assault upon the Confederate position as Heth's and Wilcox's divisions retreated to make way for fresh troops under Longstreet. The lead brigade of Texans had been absent from the army when Longstreet's corps was sent to Tennessee to reinforce the defense of Chattanooga. Lee rode up to the Texans and urged them into combat. The men let out a hearty cheer but were soon horrified when Lee began riding towards the fighting. Almost immediately the men began to shout: "Go back, General Lee! Do go back! General Lee to the rear – General Lee to the rear!" At almost the same time, a soldier broke rank and seized the reins of Lee's horse, Traveller, and proclaimed, along with the rest of the brigade, that they would not advance to stop the Union attack until Lee retreated to

[371] Lt. Col. Richard J. Harding, *Unveiling and Dedication of the Monument to Hood's Texas Brigade on the Capitol Grounds at Austin, Texas, Thursday, October Twenty-Seven Nineteen Hundred and Ten* (Houston: F. B. Chilton, 1911), 174-175.

safety.[372] In this tale, the danger of the oncoming Union advance paled in comparison to ensuring the general's well-being.

Several days after the Battle of the Wilderness, Grant probed Confederate lines and attempted to flank Lee on either side. Both armies were stretched out for miles, and as the fighting grew more intense, extra units in the rear scrambled to the front to turn the tide of the battle. When the Union army assaulted the Mule Shoe and the Bloody Angle, Lee rode forward to head off the attack, just as he did at the Wilderness.[373] According to multiple postwar accounts, General John B. Gordon took hold of Traveller's reins, as the Texans did at the Wilderness, and told Lee that he was far too valuable to the army and Confederacy for him to risk his life.[374] The men shouted to Lee that they would only go forward if he retreated. Given the gravity of the situation, Lee complied. Reportedly, the soldiers advanced with "more dash and courage" than ever before because they commanded Lee to return to safety and he had obeyed them.[375]

The "Lee to the rear" story took on greater life at the beginning of the twentieth century as the Confederate memorial crusade reached its zenith. As such, other accounts of the battles

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[372] Recounted in J. William Jones, "General Lee to the Rear," 31-33; Harding, *Unveiling*, 174-175. The Harding account claims that several men leapt forward to grab Traveller's reins, but the story is generally the same as the one recounted by J. William Jones.

[373] Gordon quotation in Jones, "General Lee to the Rear," 33. Quotation reprinted in John B. Gordon, *Reminiscences of the Civil War* (New York: B. Scribner's Sons, 1903), 278-79.

[374] J. Catlett Gibson, "Account of Colonel J. Catlett Gibson," *SHSP*, vol. 32 (1904): 202, full article is 200-215. Gibson's account is considerably more detailed when it comes to dialogue spoken by those involved. As with many of these recollections and reminiscences, there is reason to believe that the general gist of the dialogue is accurate, but it is also likely that some of the specific language was inflated to seem more heroic, especially because many of these accounts were recounted decades afterward. Gibson claims that Gordon took hold of Traveller's reins and said to Lee, "You must not expose yourself; your life is too valuable to the army and to the Confederacy for you to risk it so wantonly; we are Georgians, we are Virginians, we need no such encouragement…There is not a solider in the Confederate army that would not gladly lay down his life to save you from harm." Gibson also argued that he felt the soldiers' encouragement to Lee to get to safety had a greater impact than Gordon's "patriotic" address.

[375] Walker, "General James A. Walker's Account," 236-37. For multiple Confederate firsthand accounts first published in the Richmond *Times* in the spring of 1893 of the Mule Shoe and the Bloody Angle, see Walker, "General James A. Walker's Account," Carter, "Colonel Thomas H. Carter's Letter," W. S. Archer, "Letter of Lieutenant W. S. Archer," M. S. Stringfellow, "Rev. M. S. Stringfellow's Account," and D. W. Anderson, "Major D. W. Anderson's Relation," *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. 21 (1893): 228-254. See also William W. Smith, "Account of Dr. William W. Smith," and Gibson, "Account of Colonel J. Catlett Gibson," 200-215.

seemingly embellish details about the story to make the actions of the soldiers seem more noble, or to clarify which troops turned Lee back. Given the magnitude of his image in the South, it is unsurprising that veterans from different states claimed it was their regiment or brigade that prevented the death of Lee. A colonel from the 1st Texas Infantry wrote a letter confirming the actions of the Texas brigade at the Wilderness, even going so far as to invoke the words of General John Gregg to back up his claims. However, multiple sources relating to the Texans do not agree on who grabbed Traveller's reins. Of course, this is likely because other men wanted the glory of having "saved" Lee, or it lends credibility to Harding's claim that several men held Traveller's reins.[376] Regardless of who specifically "saved" Lee at the Wilderness or at Spotsylvania, the point is that Lee was so important to the people of the South that many of them labored to associate themselves with "saving" him.[377] Moreover, the frequency with which these stories abounded in Confederate and southern literature suggests how important Lee was to the memory of the Confederate war effort.

Throughout Lee's post-Civil War life, white and black Americans made associations of Lee and George Washington. They did, however, differ in the context and tone of those associations. White southerners routinely compared Lee to Washington, and they oftentimes went out of their way to do so. When he wrote letters asking for donations to the college, Rev. Stuart frequently referenced George Washington as its first major benefactor, while calling Lee "Washington's worthiest successor."[378] Additionally, Lee undertook his educational crusade with

[376] See also Leonard Grace Gee, "The Texan Who Held Gen. R. E. Lee's Horse," *Confederate Veteran*, vol. 12 (Oct. 1904): 478. Gee was a member of the Texas brigade and claimed that he was the one who held Traveller's reins. See also Walter Herron Taylor, *General Lee, His Campaigns in Virginia, 1861-1865, with Personal Reminiscences* (Brooklyn: Press of Braunworth & Co., 1906), 234.
[377] In the Gee account, he argued that he sat for a portrait in 1866 that depicted him holding Traveller's reins. The painting was kept in the Texas capitol building, but it was apparently destroyed when the building caught on fire. Gee argues that the artist, a Maj. McArtle, was still alive in 1904 and could corroborate the tale. Regardless, it demonstrates the lengths to which white southerners went to associate themselves with the legend of Lee.
[378] Rev. S. D. Stuart letter to unknown person, 15 Ryder Street, St. James's, July 1866. W&L.

a "zeal, devotion and spirit" worthy of Washington.[379] On the other hand, African Americans made it a point to deny Lee that association, they sometimes felt it necessary to relate other prominent Americans, such as Ulysses S. Grant with the famous founding father.[380] At other times, they associated Lee with the potential destruction of the United States, a far cry from Washington's deeds. During the 1872 presidential campaign, the black abolitionist Peter H. Clark criticized Democratic candidate Horace Greeley who proclaimed that he hoped to see the day when Americans would be proud of the deeds of men like Jackson and Lee. Clark vehemently disagreed and wondered how anyone running for president could exalt men who "sought to destroy this great Nation."[381]

Two major themes connecting Washington and Lee carried over to the 1870s onward from Lee's time as president of the college. The most prominent trope connecting the two men was their effort in fighting for independence. In many instances, the Civil War was referred to as the southern war for independence or the second war for independence. In this context, Washington was often considered to be the father of American independence and, although he fell short of achieving the goal, Lee was considered the second because of his noble fighting spirit. In their obituary, the state legislature of Mississippi referred to Lee as "the unsuccessful Washington."[382] Northerners were less willing to compare two men who fought for much different ideals, at least in their minds. "The only relationship existing between Washington and Lee," a northern newspaper growled, "was that the latter sold the grand-children of the former's

[379] "An Important Movement – Washington College, Virginia," *Staunton Spectator* (Staunton, VA), originally published in Louisville *Courier-Journal*, Sept. 11, 1866.
[380] See, for example, "The Union Victories," *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, PA), April 8, 1865.
[381] Speech by abolitionist Peter H. Clark, *The Weekly Louisianian* (New Orleans, LA), August 24, 1872.
[382] Originally contained in the Mississippi state legislature's official statement remembering Lee. Republished in "Death of Gen. Robert E. Lee," *The Vicksburg Daily Times*, October 14, 1870.

favorite servants." This referred to Lee's reputation as a harsh slave master who rented out his enslaved servants to others.[383]

Education and Washington College was the other common theme among white southerners when comparing Lee to Washington. It was easier to associate Lee with Washington regarding the facilitation of education for white southern youth presumably because Lee failed in his rebellion where Washington succeeded.[384] White southerners were correct that Lee had done more to facilitate education in the South than Washington. While Washington's contribution of $20,000 is in no way minor, Lee's personal control over the operations of the college proved more attractive to white southerners, especially in the face of Radical Reconstruction.[385]

Understandably, white southerners boasted about Lee's determination to educate white southern youth. If Lee thought it was to be done a certain way, they likely would have supported it. However, that did not stop them from painting Lee as the next Washington with a broad-brush stroke. When Lee died, one obituary argued that Washington's name was the only one in American history that "bears a near relationship with [Lee's]," indicating that Lee surpassed Washington's prestige.[386] Most of the comparisons to Washington were somewhat vague, sometimes alluding to Lee either following in his footsteps fighting for the freedom of his countrymen or perhaps noting that he exhibited Washington's modesty or other personal characteristics.[387]

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[383] See "Generalities," *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, October 21, 1870.
[384] As Senator Benjamin Harvey Hill put it, "He was…Washington, without his reward." Benjamin Harvey Hill, Sr., "Address before the Southern Historical Society, Atlanta, Georgia, February 18, 1874," in Benjamin H. Hill, Jr., ed., *Senator Benjamin H. Hill of Georgia; His Life, Speeches and Writings* (Atlanta: T. H. P. Bloodworth, 1893), 406.
[385] In 1796, Washington endowed $20,000 of James River Canal stock to the college. The contribution equated to approximately $1.87 toward each student's yearly tuition. Adjusted for inflation, the lump sum of the stock is approximately $305,000, with $30 for each student. See "Our Namesakes," Washington and Lee University, https://my.wlu.edu/about-wandl/history-and-traditions/our-namesakes.
[386] Henry Watterson, "The Dead Chieftain," Louisville *Courier-Journal*, Oct. 13, 1870.
[387] See, for example, Archer Anderson, *Address Delivered Before the Washington Literary Society of Randolph Macon College at Ashland, Virginia on the 25th of June, 1873* (Richmond: Evening News Steam Pressing, 1873), 16.

Almost immediately after Lee's death, numerous efforts to memorialize him in some physical way began. In late 1870, the Washington College board of trustees petitioned the Virginia state legislature to grant permission to change the name of the college to Washington and Lee University. The desire for a name change stemmed partially from the enlargement of the college, both in student enrollment and curriculum, but also to honor the man that advanced the quality of education for white southerners.[388] Southerners were careful not to erase the memory of George Washington from the school. Instead, they wished to honor two of the school's "most distinguished patrons."[389] Some weeks later, the board met and unanimously approved a memorial volume in Lee's name that achieved several goals: to provide an authentic sketch of Lee's life through the end of the Civil War; an account of his tenure as president; incidents, reminiscences, and other stories to illustrate his character; an account of his death and funeral observances; selected eulogies, public resolutions, and editorials of his death; and plans for a memorial to him at Washington and Lee. The memorial volume itself was the beginning in a long line of books that combined biography and sensational and sometimes exaggerated memories of Lee as a general and man.

The proceeds from the sale of Washington and Lee's memorial volume went towards funding a tomb and monument over Lee's grave in the basement of the chapel at Washington and Lee.[390] White southerners viewed a physical memorial to Lee as one of the most important ways by which they could remember him. Thus, they attempted to raise money for the tomb and monument in a number of ways throughout the 1870s. At the 1873 Virginia state fair, former

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[388] "What the Press say about the Monument to General Lee," from the Lexington, Ky. *Observe and Reporter,* Kansas City, Mo., *Times,* St. Louis *Republican,* and St. Louis *Dispatch,* republished in the *Southern Collegian,* October 29, 1870. Washington and Lee.
[389] *Staunton Spectator* (Staunton, VA), November 1, 1870.
[390] "In Memoriam. General Robert E. Lee," *The Clarion-Ledger,* January 19, 1871. Via the Washington and Lee faculty in an official statement in December 1870.

Confederate General Robert D. Lilley addressed the crowd and lauded Lee's efforts in the advancement of the South. Lee's insistence on creating curricula in mathematics and engineering allowed for the construction of railways, mines, and larger buildings.[391] Thus, Lee's memory at Washington and Lee needed to be preserved via a tomb and monument funded by willing donors.

During the meeting between Early and other former comrades of Lee, they formed the Lee Monument Association. Early and the other soldiers denounced the original plans to erect a monument to Lee in Lexington, Virginia. One private argued that Lee should be buried and enshrined in Richmond so "he will be found in the midst of his boys whom he loved so well." Early echoed these sentiments, insisting that "an enduring monument" should be "accessible to all his boys," and Lexington was too isolated in the Shenandoah Valley.[392] To help raise funds for the Richmond memorial, the Lee Monument Association offered to send small lithographs of Lee sitting on his horse, Traveller, to any college, school, lodge, club, military, or civic association that donated at least $10 to the fund.[393] By the late 1870s, the group had warmed to the idea of Lee's remains staying in Lexington, so the Association later held a ceremony at Washington and Lee in November 1878 to lay the cornerstone of a monument that was still $5,000 short of completion. Instead, the several thousand attendees observed the organizers placing numerous mementos relating to Lee's tenure beneath the cornerstone, including a letter from George Washington to the college's board of trustees from 1798. They believed these

[391] "Washington and Lee: General Lilley's Address before the South Carolina State Fair," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, November 13, 1873.
[392] Dabney H. Maury to Jubal Early, October 26, 1870, Jubal Early Papers. Library of Congress. For a complete summary of the proceedings of the Lee Monument Association, see *Organization of the Lee Monument Association and the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia* (n.p., n.d.), REL Papers, W&L. See also Connelly, *The Marble Man*, 43-46.
[393] "Editorial Paragraphs," *SHSP*, vol. 2 (July-Dec. 1876): 108-111. Traveller stepped on a nail and developed tetanus in 1871 and was humanely put down and buried on the Washington and Lee campus. For more information, see "General Lee's War-Horses, Traveller and Lucy Long," *SHSP* 18 (1890): 388-391 and "General R. E. Lee's War-Horses," *SHSP* 19 (1891): 333-335.

sentimental mementos, such as the minutes of the Board of Trustees' vote to offer Lee the presidency, might entice more donations to complete the memorial.[394]

As was typical with white southerners during the 1870s and 1880s, Lee was the subject of numerous monuments and memorials throughout the South after his death. The memorial ceremonies that accompanied the unveilings were deeply rooted in Lost Cause rhetoric centered on the perfection of Lee. The speeches that accompanied the unveilings were quite repetitive. They invariably characterized Lee as a hero of the South because of his service in the military, his piety, and his dedication to the education of the young, white, southern men. Rev. Thomas U. Dudley defined Lee "not as a patriot, but a Christian patriot; not as a soldier, but a Christian soldier." Dudley urged fellow southerners to show their appreciation for Lee's sacrifices in leading the Confederacy by "enlist[ing] under this Christian banner."[395] In certain instances, orators remarked that Lee loved the Union or that he was a "Union man."[396]

Sometimes they used Lee's own words to sustain these points. John W. Daniel's oration at the unveiling of the Lee monument in Lexington in 1883 noted Lee's letter to his sister upon the secession of Virginia. "With all my devotion to the Union, and the feeling of loyalty and duty

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[394] Other mementos included Records of the Lee Memorial Association; copy of a letter of General Washington to the Board of Trustees of Washington Academy, June 17, 1798; action of the Board of Trustees of Washington College, electing General R. E. Lee president, August 4, 1865; General Lee's letter of acceptance, August 21, 1865; roll of Liberty Hall Volunteers, Fourth Infantry, Stonewall Brigade, composed of students of Washington College, from Falling Waters to Appomattox Courthouse – four years of service; catalogues of Washington College and Washington and Lee University, with a catalogue of Alumni; copy of Charter and Laws of Washington College; copy of the *Southern Collegian*, containing an account of the funeral of General Lee; "Personal Recollections of General R. E. Lee," an address delivered by Rev. Dr. (General) William N. Pendleton January 19, 1873; Jones's Reminiscences of General Lee; copies of *Southern Collegian* for October and November 1878; photographs and autographs of the trustees and faculty of Washington and Lee University, and of General R. E. Lee; collection of United States coins. See "Laying the Corner-Stone of the Lee Monument at Washington-Lee University," *Richmond Dispatch*, November 30, 1878.

[395] J. William Jones, "His Love for His Soldiers, and Their Enthusiastic Devotion to Him," in Jones, *Personal Reminiscences*, 333.

[396] See, for example, John Warwick Daniel, "Robert Edward Lee: An Oration Pronounced at the Unveiling of the Recumbent Figure at Lexington, Virginia June 28th 1883," originally found in *Ceremonies Connected with the Inauguration of the Mausoleum and the Unveiling of the Recumbent Figure of General Robert Edward Lee, at Washington and Lee University, Lexington Va., June 28, 1883* (Lynchburg, VA: J. P. Bell & Co. Printers, 1883), 28.

of an American citizen," Lee wrote, "I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hands against my relatives, my children, my home."[397] Thus, southerners began using this sort of language to blur the line between who was a traitor and who was an American fighting for what he believed in. Lee wrestled with the idea of loyalty, and they argued that if the federal government had not been so aggressive towards the South, Lee would not have had to choose loyalty to his state. According to Daniel,

> The young Confederacy [was] without an army…ready to stand the hazard of an audacious endeavor…His beloved State would be trampled in the mire of the ways…home and country would survive only in memory and name; his people would be captives, their very slaves their masters and…[Lee], mayhap, might have seen in the dim perspective, the shadow of the dungeon or the scaffold.[398]

If anything, it was the federal government's fault that Lee led the Confederate armies and became a traitor.

Figure 3: Recumbent figure of Lee at Washington and Lee University, sculpted by Edward V. Valentine, ca. 1875[399]

[397] Quoted in Daniel, "Robert Edward Lee: An Oration," 33.
[398] Daniel, "Robert Edward Lee: An Oration," 32.
[399] Edward V. Valentine, "Recumbent figure of General R. E. Lee by Edward V. Valentine, of Richmond, Va. To be placed in the mausoleum, at Lexington, Va.," 1875. Library of Congress. This image is public domain.

At the unveiling of the mausoleum and recumbent figure of Lee at the chapel on Washington and Lee's campus, the rhetoric surrounding Lee used these same points to disassociate Lee from the Confederacy and instead painting him as an American hero or patriot. Not only did the speeches argue that the funds raised for the figure and mausoleum come during a time in which the southern economy was effectively destroyed, but ex-Confederate soldiers seemingly wished to honor Lee before taking care of themselves, adding to the allure of Lee's character.[400]

In New Orleans in 1884, Charles Erasmus Fenner reminded those present of Lee's mentor, General Winfield Scott, who once claimed that Lee was the "greatest living soldier of America."[401] Fenner attempted to positively associate Lee with Washington and his father while simultaneously characterizing the Civil War as similar to the American War for Independence. Furthermore, he clarified that the people in attendance were there "as Americans, to do honor to one of the greatest Americans," while also paying tribute to the many soldiers who fought against Lee.[402] Fenner utilized an effective tactic in making the remembrance of Lee and thus the Confederacy all about memorializing Americans, not a failed nation founded upon slavery. As David W. Blight argued, it was a blatant attempt to reunify the nation on southern terms. As with many of the speeches and literature produced during the 1870s and 1880s, Fenner also utilized the imbalance of troop numbers to appeal to Lee's bravery, arguing that Lee's "greatest task"

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[400] See W. Allan, "Historical Sketch of the Lee Memorial Association," in *Ceremonies connected with…recumbent figure of General Robert Edward Lee…*, 1. Allan recounted that on the day of Lee's funeral "a large number of ex-Confederate soldiers assembled in the court-house in Lexington, and after giving expression to the love and veneration of the South for General Lee, and to the sorrow of his death, resolved to take steps to erect a monument in honor of their great leader. They felt that even in the midst of poverty and disaster, no labor could be more grateful, no duty more sacred, than that of making manifest to the future, in some enduring way, the love and admiration of his countrymen for the character and genius of Robert E. Lee."

[401] The full quotation from Scott is "Lee was the greatest living soldier of America…if a great battle was to be fought for the liberty or slavery of America, and I were asked my judgment as to the ability of a commander, I would say with my dying breath, 'Let it be Robert E. Lee.'" In Fenner, *Ceremonies…Feb. 22, 1884*, 9.

[402] Fenner, *Ceremonies…Feb. 22, 1884*, 11.

was defending Richmond and, thus, defending the people of the South. Lee was not an aggressive secessionist; he was the defender of the South and the Lost Cause.[403]

Thus, the association with George Washington seemed fitting for white southerners. Lee led a rebellion against what was perceived to be a tyrannical government, and he settled into private life after the war to help his fellow countrymen. The only real differences were that Lee avoided politics and settled on education, and Lee lost the war. But this is where Lee and Lost Cause devotees become so crucial in sustaining and embellishing Lee's memory. They needed to overcompensate to make Lee's accomplishments and memory seem as good as or greater than Washington's. Washington led his country to victory and independence. Lee failed. Thus, they needed to change the rules to win the game. Lee did not fail; he was a southern American fighting to protect his family, his home, and his beliefs. He was not beaten; he was overpowered by factors outside of his control. Instead, he fought as hard as he could and made a remarkable effort.

By labelling Lee, the white South's greatest hero, as a Unionist, they may have believed that others in the North would be more willing to accept Lee as an American hero, effectively bridging a potential culture gap. Secondly, those who wished to memorialize secession and the actions of the Confederacy as legal or even patriotic, may have wanted others to see Lee as an American, not purely a southerner. Similarly, some believed the association of Lee as an American hero, not a rebel hero was a key in the fight for reconciliation on southern terms. If northerners accepted that Lee was still an American, then it became easier to see other former Confederates, including civilians in the same vein, thus negating the previously divisive regional differences that helped drive the nation towards civil war.

[403] Fenner, *Ceremonies…Feb.22, 1884*, 24.

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Reminiscences of Lee as the Christian soldier, the dedicated educator, and the perfect southern man were woven together from 1865 through the 1880s to create a perfect image of Lee that cemented itself in American history until the revisionist era of the mid-twentieth century. Prior his death, Lee did all he could to quietly resist Reconstruction while reinforcing the educational foundations of the South. Furthermore, Lee served as a symbol of Old South values in the uncertain era of the New South. White southerners could look to Lee as a reminder of the importance of antebellum values that they could apply to the new era. Thus, southerners unified their vision of the New South around the mythical memory of Lee as the perfect representation of what was good about their lives prior to the Civil War and why their version of the Civil War was correct.

Chapter Three:

The Fall and Rise of Jefferson Davis: His Memory as a Scapegoat to Lost Cause Icon

On the morning of May 10, 1865, a small detachment of troops from the 4th Michigan Cavalry assaulted a camp outside of Irwinville, Georgia, in hopes of capturing rebels fleeing from Richmond after it fell to Union forces. The attack took place in the early morning and with such daring that the Yankees succeeded without shots being fired. A woman asked one of the occupying Union troopers if her "old mother" could go down to the river for some water.[404] Receiving his blessing, the woman and her "mother," a person dressed in a woman's coat and whose head was covered in a black shawl, began to move away from the camp. Two Union troopers believed they were escaping and rode over to them. When they investigated, the soldiers noticed that the "mother" was wearing men's riding boots. The women who asked permission to leave the camp proved to be Varina Davis, the First Lady of the Confederacy. The "old mother" whose head was covered in a black shawl, was quickly identified as Jefferson Davis.

Though there are disputing accounts, the tale that Davis was found trying to escape in a woman's dress was spread throughout the country, and Northern newspapers widely circulated a humiliating image and account of his capture confirming this as fact.[405] As president, he was essentially embodied the South's values, morals, and strength, whereas Robert E. Lee was the

[404] John A Fox, *The Capture of Jefferson Davis* (New York: John A. Fox, 1964), 13.
[405] For conflicting accounts, see Fox, *The Capture of Jefferson Davis*; Jefferson Davis, *A Short History of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Belford, 1890) and *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1881); Henry Harnden, *The Capture of Jefferson Davis: Part Taken by Wisconsin Troops*; The disputing accounts are considered in Paul D. Mehney, "Capturing a Confederate," *Michigan History Magazine*, vol. 84, no. 3 (May/June 2000); and Neely, Holzer, and Boritt's *The Confederate Image: Prints of the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987).

embodiment of the Confederate military. Lee's efforts were praised, but the Confederate government was despised and distrusted. As such, many southerners personified him as the singular representative of their failed country. The tale that he was supposedly captured in a dress, true or false, emphasized the fact that the South was defeated militarily and humiliated emotionally. Thus, symbolized their loss, and southern civilians widely castigated and shunned him.

In a way, Davis's ensuing confinement in Fortress Monroe, Virginia, from 1865-1867 may have been one of the best possible outcomes for his image. Had he not been imprisoned and suffered perceived indignities at the hands of his captors and in the name of his southern brethren, he likely would have been forced to live in shame in hiding or abroad. Instead, he became a martyr in southern eyes, as he was the only leader who truly suffered for their cause. Thus, his image was reborn in the dank cell of Fortress Monroe, and his redemption was slow yet steady in the years after his incarceration. I argue that Davis's arc of redemption is analogous to the rise of the Lost Cause by the 1870s and 1880s.[406] Davis was the personification of the southern government and thus the overall leader of the Confederacy. As such, when the Confederacy fell in 1865, so did his image. But, his memory rebounded, thanks in large part to his writing and speeches. In turn, his fiery defense of the Confederate cause served as a catalyst of white southerners abandoning the reconciliation that Lee argued for at the end of his life.

[406] More discussion of the Lost Cause and its beliefs can be found in David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001); Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003); Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); William C. Davis, *The Cause Lost: Myths and Realities of the Confederacy* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1996); Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, ed., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000); Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865-1900* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1973); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980).

White southerners appreciated Davis's efforts and reworked his memory into one of a patriotic southerner who fought for what he believed in: the legality of secession and the righteousness of the Confederate cause.

Following his release from prison, and mired in poverty, Davis accepted invitations to speak more widely throughout the United States. His reputation as a champion of Confederate pride grew until he earned his place as a Southern hero and a respectable man in the eyes of many white northerners.[407] A firm believer in white supremacy his entire life, Davis served as an enduring symbol of Confederate pride throughout his later life and helped southerners cope with the transition into the New South with his speeches and public appearances praising the bravery of southern soldiers and righteousness and legality of the Confederate cause. This chapter will also examine the ways in which the revitalization of Davis's image was supported by his wife, Varina, and his daughter, Winnie. These two women, more than anyone outside of Davis himself, were instrumental in restoring his image in the North, and they continued to make public appearances and argue for southern pride after his death in 1889. Davis's devastating fall from public grace and his phoenix-like ascendancy to the role of Southern hero, not to mention a play on Davis's own book, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, underlie the title of this chapter, "The Fall and Rise of Jefferson Davis."

[407] Donald E. Collins, *The Death and Resurrection of Jefferson Davis* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 21.

1865-1869: "Though encased in prison, he will yet live": Imprisonment, Conspiracy, and a Man Without a Country[408]

During the Civil War, Jefferson Davis experienced a plethora of criticism from the southern populace, politicians, and military officers. Due to his irascible nature, he created many enemies among his constituents, and his decision-making as President of the Confederacy only exacerbated those poor relationships. Notable southerners such as Edward A. Pollard, editor of the *Richmond Daily Examiner*, and Generals Joseph E. Johnston and Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, continued their tirades against him during his incarceration. In certain instances, their ire only ceased with Davis's death in 1889.

In prison Davis received his rebirth as a southern hero. His suffering federal prison endeared him to white southerners who physically suffered during the destructive war. His pain was akin to their pain. One major theme in this time period is Davis's status as a representation of the Confederacy. As the president, his decisions influenced everything within the South. When Davis was captured, the Confederacy was symbolically captured. While Davis suffered in prison and endured a trial about his treason, it was as if the entire Confederacy was put on trial. The Columbus, Ohio *Crisis* perfectly exemplified this idea when it wrote that it was useless to try Davis for treason when all southerners who voted for him to be president were equally guilty.[409] Thus, when Davis's enemies attacked him, they were unknowingly attacking the country they had fought to create. As John Esten Cooke wrote, Davis was "not Commander-in-Chief only, but the whole Southern Confederacy himself."[410]

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[408] Taken from T. R. Bonner, a speech before the Texas Representative Hall, Austin, TX, Nov. 10, 1866. From *Dallas Daily Herald*, December 1, 1866.
[409] "Case of Jefferson Davis," Columbus (Ohio) *Crisis*, reprinted in Bolivar (Tennessee) *Bulletin*, Feb. 9, 1867.
[410] John Esten Cooke, *Wearing of the Gray; Being Personal Portraits, Scenes and Adventures of the War* (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1867), 588-89.

Davis spent four years in Fortress Monroe. His captors, notably commander General Nelson A. Miles, treated Davis with little respect. Irons were shackled to his ankles in the beginning of his incarceration. He was forbidden from receiving visitors or writing or receiving letters. His poor health and rough conditions generated little sympathy with northerners. When Dr. John J. Craven was brought in to provide aid, Yankees scorned Craven for taking care of a "wicked old traitor."[411] Davis's isolation proved to be an easily exploited avenue through which his enemies could attack him without fear of retaliation on his part.

Detractors believed that his incarceration served as the perfect time to assail his character and image. Joseph E. Johnston, one of the Confederacy's army commanders and a long-term enemy, began his crusade to discredit Davis's actions as Confederate president while simultaneously absolving himself of all blame in his failures during the war. Johnston took Davis's inability to respond as an opportunity to argue that his removal from command of the Army of Tennessee doomed the Confederate war effort in the crucial fall of 1864. If there was someone southerners should blame for the defeat, it was Davis.[412] P. G. T. Beauregard also utilized Davis's inability to respond, as he began his public criticism of Davis in the same manner as Johnston.[413] These claims laid the foundations for what became a "battle of the books" with Davis in the 1870s that lasted well into the 1880s.

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[411] *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 14, 1865. In Chester D. Bradley, "Dr. Craven and the Prison Life of Jefferson Davis," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 62, no. 1 (1954): 53.

[412] Craig L. Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston: A Civil War Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), 340.

[413] William J. Cooper, Jr., ed., *Jefferson Davis: The Essential Writings* (New York: Random House, 2003), 384. Davis's incarceration was littered with letters to and from his wife in which they lamented the lack of support and outright criticism Davis received from members of the Confederate high command. Varina Davis informed her husband that while most Confederate generals and members of the Confederate government had sent along their love and well-wishes, there were a notable few who were described as "the meanest and basest of mankind" – Beauregard, Johnston, and a Beauregard staffer named Thomas Jordan. According to Varina, Jordan's critique was exceptionally vicious, which greatly upset her. Davis attempted to calm her by arguing that she should not worry about the attacks because "it is not possible for men to shift their responsibility to another." Although Davis was usually hesitant to fight back against his detractors, he did not restrain himself from relieving his pain in his letters to Varina. Also see Hudson Strode, *Jefferson Davis: Tragic Hero* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1955).

Outside of the military, Davis had plenty of adversaries in the public sphere. During the Civil War, he received near-constant criticism from some members of the southern press. Robert Barnwell Rhett, editor of the *Charleston Mercury*, and John M. Daniel and Edward A. Pollard, editors of the *Richmond Daily Examiner*, seemingly questioned every decision Davis made. They castigated him for his questionable promotions and demotions of officers, and the atheist Daniel described Davis's calls for nationwide fasting and prayer for divine assistance as "evidences of mental weakness."[414] These attacks frequently ignored Davis's role as president and devolved into personal insults. One of the newspapers referred to Davis as "incompetent" and "motionless as a clod" regarding his urgency in addressing military matters.[415] Late in the war, the newspapers placed the impending doom of the Confederacy on Davis's shoulders. To the *Examiner*, "Every military misfortune of the country is palpably and confessedly due to the personal interference of Mr. Davis."[416] The editors also noted in early 1865 that the South was "not afraid of being conquered by the enemy, so much as being defeated by Mr. Davis."[417] The newspapers tied the fate of the Confederacy to every action of the president. In a way, they portrayed the Confederacy and Davis as one and the same.

Pollard is a relatively under-represented figure in examining the evolution of Davis's public image. Few historians take the time to consider how his writing after the war affected his memory among white southerners.[418] Less than a year after the end of the Civil War, Pollard

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[414] *Richmond Examiner*, May 19, 1862.
[415] William Preston Johnston, *The Life of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston, Embracing His Services in the Armies of the United States, the Republic of Texas, and the Confederate States* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1878), 511. Preston does not give the newspaper a name, but he refers to it as "One of the most rabid of the fire-eating journals in the South." Most historians do not speculate on the newspaper's identity, but it is safe to say that it is likely the *Charleston Mercury* or the *Richmond Examiner* given their active opposition to the Davis administration.
[416] *Richmond Examiner*, July 10, 1864.
[417] *Richmond Examiner*, January 9, 1865.
[418] See, for example, Felicity Allen, *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 512, 556. This is one of the only major, recent biographies of Davis that actively examine Pollard, yet Allen's is also limited.

published the first of three books that argued for Davis's and the Confederate government's roles in defeat. Pollard reiterated that Davis was solely to blame for the failures of the Confederacy. As Pollard put it, Davis could not "escape the syllogism that has been applied to every public ruler since the world began."[419] Pollard also mentions Davis's vanity having driven many of his decisions throughout the first book.[420] *The Lost Cause* was particularly brutal towards Davis, and it was riddled with inconsistencies and utter falsehoods. He wrote that by the end of the war, Davis's supporters were "scarcely more than that train of followers which always fawns on power and lives on patronage."[421] Joseph E. Johnston set out to write his own narrative of the war due to the "absurdities and misrepresentations of Pollard's 'Lost Cause.'"[422] Former Confederate General Henry A. Wise echoed Johnston's statements, writing that his representation in *The Lost Cause* was "worse than fiction…inaccurate [and] grossly erroneous in every single statement."[423] These problems contributed to a dwindling in Pollard's status as a prominent southern writer by the end of the 1860s with the publication of several more books.

Although Pollard and other enemies of Davis set out to discredit the former president in the first year of his incarceration, the president did enjoy some support from white southerners. Within six months, his suffering in chains in a dank cell endeared him to many of the southerners he alienated during the Civil War. Even so, some believed he would be better off living abroad for the rest of his life so the nation could heal. One newspaper suggested that a homestead be

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[419] Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause; A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (Atlanta: National Publishing Company, reprint 1868), 761. In *The Lost Cause,* Pollard argued that Davis was primarily responsible for the Confederate defeat due to his many character deficiencies and poor decision-making. Among others, Pollard wrote that Davis's "scholarship smelt of the closet," he had no practical judgment, "spurned the counsels of equal minds, and rejected the advice of the intelligent," and acted subservient to the "smallest and most unworthy of favourites [*sic*]." (91) He also portrayed Davis as being a weak man, writing that Davis was "notoriously governed by his wife," and "those who knew Mr. Davis best testified that he was the weakest of men." (657)
[420] See Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 387, 581, and 685.
[421] All quotations in this paragraph found in Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 657.
[422] "The Accuracy of Northern Letter Writers Illustrated," *The Selma Weekly Messenger*, June 15, 1867.
[423] "Henry A. Wise on his Biographer," *The Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, November 6, 1867.

purchased for Davis in a foreign country, "whither he shall retire upon release from imprisonment." The newspaper suggested that former Confederate soldiers donate a dollar each and officers donate as much as they could.[424]

Others actively urged Andrew Johnson to pardon Davis as early as the fall of 1865. The New York *Tribune* characterized the South as having a "unanimous desire [for] Mr. Davis's pardon."[425] The *Wilmington Herald* (NC) transcribed the proceedings of a local town hall meeting in which Mayor John Dawson spoke to the crowd, believing if Johnson knew Davis's "purity" on the same level as the people of Wilmington, Davis would have been released "without a moment's hesitation."[426] The meetings intended to both support Davis and call for his pardon drew many attendees and fostered a renewed sense of white Southern pride. However, some Northerners were wary of these new developments. General Samuel R. Curtis forbade these public meetings in Lynchburg, Virginia. With Reconstruction under way, Curtis likely wished to mitigate any potential agitation among newly freed black southerners. How might they feel about white southerners holding a meeting calling for the pardon of the man who acted as president of a rebellion to keep them in bondage? As Curtis put it, he appreciated the "natural sympathy" for Davis, but he did not think it was prudent to hold these gatherings because they may "excite and inflame the feelings" of former Confederates.[427] Curtis must also have understood that these white southerners chose to support Davis because he was suffering on their behalf. Even though this invokes the idea of a Christ-like suffering for white southerners, they largely relegated those comparisons to Robert E. Lee.

[424] "Home for Jefferson Davis," *Daily Phoenix* (Columbia, SC), Dec. 1, 1865.
[425] Reprinted in "Jefferson Davis's Trial," *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), Nov. 3, 1865.
[426] "Town Meeting Last Night," *Wilmington Herald*, Nov. 23, 1865.
[427] No title, *Edgefield Advertiser* (Edgefield, SC), Oct. 25, 1865.

The Charlotte *Democrat* took it one step further and argued that the only reason Davis was in prison was because southerners had thrust him into the position of president.[428] This sentiment perhaps indicated their guilt. They felt sorrowful that their president, the man who reluctantly accepted the nomination, was languishing in a moldy cell. They were enjoying freedom from incarceration, the price of which was being paid for by Davis. His distress was essential in the rehabilitation of his image. Less than a year removed from heavy criticism, his imprisonment not only garnered sympathy but also engendered self-reflection in many Southerners' minds.

Southern criticism was the least of his concerns. During his time in prison, Davis faced several major charges from the federal government: that he conspired in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and committed treason against the United States. Thus, his greatest foes became President Andrew Johnson and his cabinet, notably Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. Additionally, the northern public was outraged regarding the treatment of Union prisoners in Confederate camps. They placed the blame on Davis because of his role as president. The theme that underscored the North's ire against Davis was their need for satisfaction against the Confederacy. Since they could not achieve retribution against singular white southerners, the charges against Davis seemed symbolically fitting. Davis, the embodiment of the South, was publicly shamed for his perceived role deaths in Andersonville. He was also metaphorically put on trial for the murder of Lincoln and for treason against the US in the press. In this sense, the whole South was on trial for its collective roles in the misery stemming from the Civil War.

Much of the Northern public initially howled for retribution against Davis because of the gross mistreatment of Union prisoners. Johnson received numerous letters from Northern families who mourned the loss of loved ones in the camps. Elizabeth Irvin of Indiana sent

[428] "Right and Proper," *Charlotte Democrat*, October 10, 1865.

Johnson a photo of her son and intreated that he should remember "ten thousand [prisoners] that Jefferson Davis had willfully put to death" if there was inclination to be merciful. A man named A. Noble wrote to Thaddeus Stevens believing his son had been treated like a "beast of the field frozen and starved" by Davis.[429] An Illinois rope maker wanted the privilege of making the rope to hang Davis, and a group of citizens from Indiana urged Johnson to hold off on Davis's execution and instead parade him around the United States in a woman's dress and charge the public for the privilege of ridiculing him.[430] While Davis was never tried for his role in the treatment of Union prisoners, the federal government had the opportunity to exact retribution from Davis in other ways.

Soon after Davis was captured, Johnson's administration debated as to what they would charge Davis with: assassination conspiracy or treason. Despite the lack of evidence implicating him in the assassination conspiracy and the Andersonville abuses, Northerners severely rebuked Davis and his fellow Southerners. In his eulogy of Lincoln, Reverend Sidney Dean called for the trial and execution of the conspirators, notably naming Davis, Booth, and very surprisingly, Robert E. Lee.[431] The New York *Herald* fanned the flames by claiming that there was no doubt that Davis was complicit.[432] "Their hands are red with the blood of Abraham Lincoln and of Wm. Seward," the *Vermont Journal* cried, "Those men who have prated so loudly about their high civilization and chivalric refinement have deliberately chosen their places in history as murderers and assassins."[433] The *Philadelphia Telegram* proclaimed, prophetically,

> Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis each took his life in his own hands when the war was opened in 1861. Whichever failed would die. Lincoln has triumphed, yet died

[429] A. Noble to Thaddeus Stevens, Buffalo, NY, Feb. 2, 1866, in Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 154.
[430] The Irvin, rope maker, and Indiana citizens quotations can be found in Cynthia Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial: The Treason Prosecution of Jefferson Davis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 22-23.
[431] Rev. Sidney Dean, *Eulogy Pronounced in the City Hall, Providence, April 19, 1865, of the Occasion of the funeral Solemnities of Abraham Lincoln* (Providence, RI: H. H. Thomas & Co., 1865), 18.
[432] New York *Herald*, April 25, 1865.
[433] "Jeff. Davis and His Cabinet the Real Murderers," *Vermont Journal* (Winston, VT), April 29, 1865.

> beneath an assassin's hand. Davis has failed, and shall he, the defeated, live, while the triumphant leader of the Union died? Is this justice? Justice demands that Jefferson Davis be hung. The cause of the Union and the people echo the demand, and the only way he can be hung is by trial before a military court…Unless our advice be followed, Jefferson Davis will escape, and all the fruits of daring and self-sacrifice be scattered on the altar of false sympathy and rebellious arrogance.[434]

A Philadelphia man wrote to Stanton asking, "Will you give me the liberty of executing him if condemned? I will travel at my own cost to wherever it may be necessary for the purpose.[435]

In his defense, Jefferson's wife, Varina, wrote to her friends in the federal government, such as Francis Preston Blair, regarding his innocence in the assassination plot. She even asked Horace Greeley, the noted northern editor and political influencer, what her husband could possibly have gained from conspiring to kill the "kindly" Lincoln thus replacing him with a "bitter enemy" of the South in Johnson.[436] Stanton and his aides tried to implicate Davis in the assassination through a variety of means – some of them less than legal – but they were unable to prove that Davis was complicit.[437] Since there was great pushback regarding the assassination conspiracy charge and a lack of evidence, Johnson and his cabinet resolved to move on to the charge of treason against Davis which had a substantially greater chance of being upheld in court. A charge of treason would require a substantial amount of evidence, so Johnson tasked Edwin Stanton with acquiring it.

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[434] *Philadelphia Telegram*, reprinted in the *Norfolk Post*, Dec. 21, 1865.
[435] William Hampshire to Edwin Stanton, May 16, 1865. Found in Thomas Reed Turner, *Beware the People Weeping: Public Opinion and the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 47.
[436] Varina Davis to Horace Greeley, June 22, 1865, Jefferson Davis Family Collection, in Joan E. Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy: Varina Davis's Civil War* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006). See also Varina Davis to Francis Preston Blair, June 6, 1865, Blair Family Papers, Library of Congress. For more information regarding Jefferson's protesting of his innocence to his wife and the circumstances surrounding his accusation, see Varina Davis, *Jefferson Davis, Ex-President of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Belford Company, 1890), 2: 704n, 641-642; Jefferson Davis to Walker Taylor, Aug. 31, 1889, in Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*; Turner, *Beware the People Weeping*, 95.
[437] For more information on the attempts to implicate Davis in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, see Turner, *Beware the People Weeping*; David Miller DeWitt, *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln and Its Expiation* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1909); and Helen J. Campbell, *The Case for Mrs. Surratt* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1943).

Historian Thomas Reed Turner argued that people were naturally going to suspect the enemy of being involved in a national tragedy such as the Lincoln assassination. Much of the public believed that the federal government would not have issued charges without sufficient evidence to support its claims.[438] Even newspapers loyal to the federal government insisted that the charges be proven. White southerners were largely unwilling to believe that Davis had anything to do with Lincoln's assassination. One Kentucky state senator attempted to redeem Davis's image by deflecting labels of "traitor" back toward northern leaders. "Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson were as much, if not more, traitors to the Government than Jeff. Davis," he proclaimed, "The country was nothing more nor less than an empire, with President Johnson as dictator."[439] The senator did not necessarily come to Davis's defense, but he instead condemned the vilification of Davis though the entire South was being charged with complicity in the matter.

By 1866, most discussion of Davis as a party to Lincoln's assassination had disappeared. This left the treason charge, and Davis remained mired in prison. When Johnson took office, he vowed to deal harshly with traitors, and the case against Davis seemed to be quite straightforward. Davis had, indeed, "levied war" against the United States within the meaning of Article II of the United States Constitution.[440] But there were some in the US who wondered how Johnson would try Davis considering his bungling of the Lincoln assassination conspiracy charge. Most observers came to a similar conclusion: a trial must occur because Johnson could not simply execute a prisoner without a legal precedent. If Davis were executed without trial, it would set a precedent. Moreover, pushback against such occurrences might devolve into anarchy in the country.

[438] Turner, *Beware the People Weeping*, 61, 128.
[439] *Norfolk Post*, Dec. 21, 1865.
[440] Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial*, 22.

The Chicago *Times* admonished the Tennessee and Indiana state legislatures, which called for Johnson to hang Davis for treason upon his capture in 1865. The *Times* was upset with the prospect of an execution without a trial and the worldwide ramifications of such an action. "Our own existence as a nation grew from a rebellion; and we, the descendants of rebels, can afford to deal leniently with those of the same name," the *Times* lectured, "Should this Government hang Davis, the precedent would be followed by every Government in Europe in its dealings with the leaders of rebellions."[441] This sentiment continued throughout his years of incarceration. As late as 1867, the *Selma Times and Messenger* cautioned that Davis "*must* be tried, publicly, fairly, impartially, and promptly" or the reputation of the federal government would ultimately fail.[442]

Cynthia Nicoletti provides arguably the best overview of the government's efforts in trying Davis for treason. Her major argument is that Charles O'Conor, a prominent New York attorney and Davis's lead defense counsel, was able to hold off federal prosecution, and ultimately prevent a trial, by repeatedly expressing his belief in Davis's acquittal based on the legality of secession. He contended that Davis's citizenship and loyalty to the Union was removed when Mississippi, his home state, seceded from the Union, thus rendering him incapable of committing treason.[443] By arguing for Davis's lack of citizenship, O'Connor muddied the waters of treason and legal precedent. As a result, there were several delays, usually requested by the prosecution in holding the trial. In addition, numerous newspapers argued that trying Davis in relation to secession would only reopen the debate about its legality.[444] Albert Taylor Bledsoe, a classmate of Davis's at West Point, wrote *Is Davis a Traitor? Or, Was*

[441] "Jack Ketch as a Legislator," *Daily Phoenix* (Columbia, SC), December 1, 1865 (reprinted from Chicago *Times*).
[442] "The Release of Mr. Davis," *Selma Times and Messenger* (Selma, AL), May 14, 1867.
[443] Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial*, 5-6.
[444] See *Natchez Courier*, May 24, 1866 and *New Orleans* Crescent, Oct. 3, 1866. In Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial*, 159.

Secession a Constitutional Right Previous to the War of 1861? Taylor's book questioned whether the federal government could try Davis and not have to also consider the legality of secession.[445] This tactic proved successful in the crusade to vindicate Davis in the eyes of Johnson's government. Although the trial never happened, people around the United States and abroad debated his guilt, whether he committed treason, and whether his actions deserved to be punished.

Some international voices, mostly from England and France, agreed that Davis deserved to be punished for his role as President. However, few of them, if any, suggested that he be hanged. Some Northerners called for harsh retribution against Davis and the Confederacy. Union General John A. Logan advocated the hanging of Davis, the entire Confederate cabinet, and all members of the Confederate government that resigned their seats in the United States Congress.[446] Others in the North were sympathetic to Davis's plight, as the German Connecticut *Staats Zeitung* urged its readers to celebrate the Fourth of July be remembering the "conqueror" George Washington and the "great statesman riveted in chains, cast in a dungeon…Jefferson Davis, the martyr of States Rights."[447]

While Davis languished in prison, Pollard continued his rhetorical assaults with new books *The Lost Cause Regained* and *Life of Jefferson Davis*. After *The Lost Cause Regained* rubbed some white southerners the wrong way due to its lack of reputable sources and falsehoods, Pollard's *Life of Jefferson Davis* was poorly received. Most people anticipated that it was just as counter factual as the *Lost Cause Regained*. They were correct. One of the major sticking points white southerners had with Pollard's newest publication was his increasing

[445] Albert Taylor Bledsoe, *Is Davis a Traitor? Or, Was Secession a Constitutional Right Previous to the War of 1861?* (Baltimore: Innes & Company, 1866).
[446] *Kansas Chief* (White Cloud, Kansas), July 20, 1865.
[447] *Kansas Chief* (White Cloud, Kansas), July 20, 1865.

disillusion with the southern leadership who failed to achieve independence. With each new book, Pollard cast his net out wider, looking for someone to blame. Since some southerners wished to move on from the war and defeat, they became agitated that Pollard was working so hard to dredge up the painful past. "Pollard's 'histories' are portraits of his own prejudices and cranky notions, and not statements of facts," the *Daily Phoenix* proclaimed, his "late writings are all in the interests of the North – ministering to Northern prejudices and confirming Northern slanders of Southern statesmen and gentlemen." The *Wilmington Morning Star* put it best when it wrote, "There is something repugnant…in bitter diatribes…on a fallen cause and its unfortunate leaders." It was bad enough when the victors kicked the losers when they were down, but when a southerner wrote in that manner, it engendered feelings of "unmixed disgust."[448]

Despite the severity of the charges against him, willingly Davis cast himself as a martyr for the Confederate cause. By refusing to ask for a pardon from Johnson, he felt that a trial against him might validate secession and vindicate the rebel cause. Davis steadfastly believed in the Confederate cause and the legality of secession, at one point writing, "Reflection has only the more confirmed me in the justice of the cause for which I suffer and though I die for it, still will the faith remain with me and be avowed by me until the final hour."[449] In the spring of 1866, he further boasted, "I have lived for my country…and have risked on many occasions my life in her service, [so] it may therefore be pardonable of me to say I am now willing to die for our sacred cause."[450] One of his close friends reiterated that in a letter to Varina Davis, stating, "what has he

[448] "Local Items," *The Daily Phoenix* (Columbia, SC), May 11, 1869; "Mr. Pollard's 'Life of Jefferson Davis,'" *The Wilmington Morning Star* (Wilmington, NC), November 16, 1869. The entire article is worth an examination. It makes a number of good points and tears down Pollard's writing in great detail.
[449] Letter to Clement C. Clay, December, 1865. In Jefferson Davis, *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, ed. Lynda L. Crist, 14 vols. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971-2014), 12: 65.
[450] Letter to Clement C. Clay, Spring 1866. In Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial*, 65.

done to ask pardon for?"[451] Some argued against Davis's intentional suffering for the cause.[452] Christian missionary Paul Bagley attempted to act as an intermediary between Davis and Johnson, but it ultimately fell through. Davis was certain that his pain was the best path for both him and the citizens of the South.

The redemption of Davis's image in prison was a slow process. However, the outrage over his reported mistreatment in prison and his steadfast support of the Confederate cause and secession helped improve the white South's opinion of him by 1867 and 1868. While he remained in prison, Davis had supporters on the outside. These people worked diligently to secure his release and rehabilitate his public image. After the first year, he was permitted to write and receive letters to certain individuals, mostly his wife, and take walks around the fortress walls. As Davis suffered from ill-health, received medical care from Dr. John J. Craven for the first six months of his incarceration. Described as living "literally in a tomb" and a "dungeon," Davis languished in this dank cell for the first four-and-a-half months of his imprisonment.[453] He successfully petitioned for Davis's transfer to Carroll Hall, a two-story building serving as the officers' quarters so that his health might improve.

Perhaps Craven's most significant contribution to the saga was his book, *The Prison Life of Jefferson Davis*, which was also ghost-written by New York Democrat Charles G. Halpine. Craven's work was orchestrated by Davis's legal counsel, Charles O'Conor, and greatly assisted by letters supplied by Varina Davis, who believed that Craven could garner support for Davis's

[451] F. R. Lubbock to Varina Davis, April 6, 1867, Box 24, Jefferson Davis Papers, Museum of the Confederacy.
[452] In 1868 and 1869, Pollard released his second and third books about Davis and the Lost Cause. These two books were unrestrained attacks upon Davis, and the combativeness of the books led to poor sales numbers. Pollard faded into relative obscurity. See Pollard, *The Lost Cause Regained* (New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., 1868) and *Life of Jefferson Davis, with a Secret History of the Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta: National Publishing Company, 1869).
[453] Robert McElroy, *Jefferson Davis: The Real and Unreal* (New York: Smithmark, 1937), 2: 526; "Jeff's Dungeon," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 27, 1865. See also Chester D. Bradley, "Dr. Craven and the Prison Life of Jefferson Davis," 53.

suffering in prison.[454] Instead, Craven's portrayal of Davis "seriously annoyed" him, and he wrote copious notes and comments in the margins of his personal copy.[455] One particular fabrication described Davis feeding crumbs to a pet mouse in his cell which Craven described as "the only living thing he now had power to benefit."[456] Davis scribbled a flippant "pshaw" in his personal copy. Davis was predictably upset with this characterization. However, Edward K. Eckert claims that the book successfully altered Davis's image from that of the leader of a failed rebellion to a martyr for the Lost Cause.[457]

But it was his wife, Varina, that proved to be his greatest ally. Varina spent much of the summer after her husband's capture and subsequent incarceration in a perpetual state of anger and animosity towards Northerners whom she vilified in correspondence. She castigated General Miles, who authorized a strip-search of the females in the group in which Jefferson was initially captured and was the man in charge of his imprisonment. She wrote a scathing letter to Andrew Johnson demanding permission to visit her husband which was initially denied. She ranted that there was "no bond uniting [Southerners] to the Northerners," and felt "bitter" against Northerners because of the level of destruction throughout the southern states.[458]

Varina achieved a small victory in August 1865 when General Miles gave the Davis's permission to write to each other on the condition that the letters be framed within family matters.[459] Since Jefferson could only write to Varina, she became his solace during his

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[454] Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 177.
[455] *Alexandria Gazette*, July 2, 1866;
[456] Edward K. Eckert, *"Fiction Distorting Fact": The Prison Life, annotated by Jefferson Davis* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 86.
[457] Eckert, *Fiction Distorting Fact*, xvi.
[458] Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 166. See Varina Davis to Jefferson Davis, Nov. 7 and 13, 1865, Jan. 22, 1866 for her helping to keep Jefferson's spirits up.
[459] Interactions between Miles and Varina during her stays at Fortress Monroe found in Peter D. DeMontravel, *A Hero to His Fighting Men: Nelson A. Miles, 1839-1925* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1998), 3-6, 50, 59, 331, 356; and Bradley, "Dr. Craven and the Prison Life of Jefferson Davis," 51, 55-56, 70.

imprisonment and, in a sense, his only view to the outside world.[460] Not willing to stand idly by while her husband languished in federal prison, Varina corresponded with Horace Greeley and others and had hired Charles O'Connor to represent her husband on trial.[461] Davis's condition worsened in the fall of 1865, and Varina feared for her husband's wellbeing. The Federal government, however, remained concerned about a rescue attempt, and thus Davis was kept under heavy guard and was only allowed one visitor, Richmond clergyman Charles Minnegerode. At the same time, Varina's letter writing campaign achieved some success as President Johnson backed off his conviction that Jefferson should be executed thanks to pressure put on him by the influential Blair family.[462]

In 1866, Varina traveled to New Orleans, using her influential presence as First Lady of the Confederacy to engender sympathy for her husband's ailing condition. The welcome she received demonstrated the increasing resolve to stand behind the Davises. A "warm welcome was accorded me everywhere," Varina exulted, and she found it difficult to convince milliners and merchants to accept her money.[463] Davis's health was saved by his wife who used all available political connections to remedy Jefferson's situation. Joan E. Cashin argued that this showed political skills that were not seen when Varina was First Lady of the Confederacy.[464]

Throughout 1867 and 1868, she frequently gave interviews to newspapers in order to highlight Jefferson's physical struggles and foster public pressure against Johnson and the

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[460] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American*, 545. For a lengthier discussion of her correspondence with her husband, see 545-549.

[461] Varina appealed to Greeley: "How can the honest men and gentlemen of your country stand idly by to see a gentleman maligned, insulted, tortured and denied the right of trial by the usual forms of law?...With all archives of our government in the hands of your government, do they despair of proving him a rogue, falsifier, assassin and traitor – that they must in addition guard him like a wild beast, and chain him or fear his unarmed hands will in a casemated cell subvert the government? Shame, shame – he is not held for the ends of Justice but for those of torture…Is no one among you bold enough to defend him?" Varina Davis to Greeley, June 22, 1865, in Allen, *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart*, 418.

[462] Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 171-74.

[463] Varina Davis, *Jefferson Davis, Ex-President of the Confederate States of America*, 2: 756.

[464] By the time she arrived at Fortress Monroe in May 1866, Jefferson's physician believed that he could die in prison if measures were not taken. Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 176.

federal captors. When asked how long she intended to remain at Fortress Monroe, she answered, "until Mr. Davis is ordered away for trial, or he is released from prison, or dies."[465] Davis's health appeared to ebb and flow during Varina's time with him. Various newspapers proclaimed him to be on death's door just weeks after declaring him well. In an interview in early May, 1866, Varina mentioned to the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* that she feared for his recovery if he was afflicted with another spell of intermittent fever or congestive chills.[466] Later in the month, Varina hinted to journalists that her presence was much-needed medicine for Jefferson.[467] The *Wilmington Daily Dispatch* echoed the positive news about Jefferson's health in late June.[468]

The concern over Davis's condition peaked in late 1866. Reports emerged that ex-Governor and lawyer for Jefferson Davis, Thomas Pratt, spoke with President Johnson and urged the release or transfer of Davis as he was reportedly "failing rapidly in health."[469] Horace Greeley supported Pratt's statements, and it was not the only time Greeley came to Davis's defense. He later advocated for Davis's release and contributed funds to pay his bail. People in the South also petitioned Johnson to release Davis. Delegations submitted letters and proposals to Johnson regarding a pardon or to express their solidarity for their former president.[470] One group wrote about "the sorrow common to all the people of the Southern States at [Davis's] continued confinement."[471]

By late 1866, white southerners largely cast aside any bitterness towards Davis they may have harbored for the previous few years. Instead, their pleas to Johnson and other lawmakers indicated a notable change of heart. One delegation member characterized Davis as "still a

[465] "The Time Mrs. Davis Proposed to Remain," *The Evening Telegraph* (Philadelphia), May 7, 1866.
[466] "The Visit of Mrs. Davis to her Husband – The Health of Mr. Davis," The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 9, 1866.
[467] "Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson Davis," *Clarke County Democrat* (Grove Hill, AL), May 31, 1866.
[468] "General Items," *Wilmington Daily News*, June 26, 1866.
[469] "Items of General News," *Nashville Union and American*, June 28, 1866.
[470] "Application for Mr. Davis's Pardon," *Yorkville Enquirer* (York, SC), Oct. 26, 1865.
[471] "Memorial," *Dallas Daily Herald*, Dec. 1, 1866.

monument of nobleness and chivalry."[472] Both northerners and southerners also expressed exasperation regarding the drawn-out process of Davis's potential treason trial. Southerners maintained that releasing Davis would quell any remaining animosity between the North and South as well as lead to a new era of peace within the nation.[473] Northerners, on the other hand, believed that Johnson's inability to properly try Davis indicated that the idea of the trial should never have been proposed in the first place. The *New York Independent* contended that the imprisonment and subsequent release of Davis was utterly bungled by the federal government. It wondered why Davis was allowed bail after two years and after being charged with treason.[474]

There were, however, some in the North and South that still believed in Davis's guilt and the need for a trial. An anonymous letter from Richmond declared that "nearly all the white population [of Richmond] are still traitors" and that Davis was better suited to Libby Prison than the Spottswood Hotel.[475] The *Christian Recorder* argued that not trying Davis was a massive mistake because he was "embodiment of the doctrine of secession," and a lack of trial might legitimized secession.[476] The New York *Post* further added injustice had been done, as rather than "being put to the experience of a turn in Libby Prison" where torture was conducted towards "many better men" than Davis. He was allowed to walk free which turned the wording of the Constitution regarding treason to be nothing more than "dead letters."[477] For some, Davis still

[472] *Dallas Daily Herald*, Dec. 1, 1866.
[473] See "Memorial," *Dallas Daily Herald*, Dec. 1, 1866, and Petition of the Ladies of Iberville, Louisiana, to Andrew Johnson, n.d., Box 246, Louisiana Petitions, Jefferson Davis Amnesty Papers, NA-DC. In Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial*, 23.
[474] Comments from the *New York Independent* were printed on May 28, 1867 and republished by the New York *Daily Herald* on May 29, 1867. The *London Star* also quipped that Davis allegedly owned as many as 700 slaves, "but the only one of his bondsmen who ever distinguished himself was Horace Greeley," Aug. 1, 1867.
[475] "Letter from Richmond," sent on May 10, 1866 and republished by the *Harrisburg Telegraph*, May 14, 1867.
[476] "Release of Davis,"
[477] Comments from the *New York Times*, *New York Nation*, and *New York Independent* were printed on May 28, 1867 and republished by the New York *Daily Herald* on May 29, 1867. The *London Star* also quipped that Davis allegedly owned as many as 700 slaves, "but the only one of his bondsmen who ever distinguished himself was Horace Greeley," Aug. 1, 1867.

deserved punishment for secession and the treatment of Union prisoners, but their cries for justice from Davis and the Confederacy went unmet.

By early 1867, much of the nation was clearly past the point of caring about Davis. Many newspapers and citizens just wanted the unanswered question of his guilt to be cast aside so the country could properly heal. As a result, in May Davis was released from prison on bail. A few weeks prior, Varina spent several days in Washington meeting with prominent Southerners regarding Jefferson's freedom.[478] Though his bail was largely posted by influential men from Richmond and two notable New Yorkers, Horace Greeley and Augustus Schell, it is improbable that Varina's petitioning did not shift some public sentiment.[479]

Davis's release was many throughout the United States, and many people were simply pleased that the years-long legal debacle was over. By the end, many Americans simply desired an end to the "will-they-or-won't-they" attitude exhibited by the federal government in taking Davis to trial. The Petersburg *Express* wrote that Davis's discharge would be met with "a certain degree of relief by the vast majority of the northern people."[480] Elements of the American public exhibited what Cynthia Nicoletti called "pandemonium." Davis was almost immediately flocked by former Confederates and New York allies. Republican New Yorker George Templeton Strong disgustedly asked "Why doesn't the Common Council offer him the Governor's room in the City Hall to receive friends in?"[481]

Many others rejoiced at the outcome and castigated his extended time in federal custody. "The authorities are thus relieved of the odium of keeping a prisoner arbitrarily and unlawfully

[478] "Return of Mrs. Jeff. Davis," *Baltimore Sun*, May 1, 1867.
[479] Railroad mogul and Johnson administration insider John W. Garrett was swayed by Varina's personal pleas, and he personally urged Edwin Stanton to comply and release Davis. See Varina Davis to John W. Garrett, September 8, 1865; April 10, [n.d. Friday morning]; May 1 and 30, 1867, Box 76, Robert Garrett Papers, L.C. In Nicoletti, *Secession on Trial*, 189.
[480] Republished in "Contents of the Press upon the Enlargement of Mr. Davis," *Richmond Dispatch*, May 15, 1867.
[481] George Templeton Strong, *Diary of George Templeton Strong*, ed. Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas, 4 vols. (New York: MacMillan, 1952), 4: 136.

confined," the Baltimore *Gazette* proclaimed, "and the American people are to be no longer scandalized and mortified at the spectacle of a high-toned gentleman, an able statesman, and reproachless patriot, held to suffer vicarious punishment for the action of several millions of his fellow-countrymen."[482] The Lynchburg *Republican* declared that the news filled the hearts of "every American citizen who prizes the fair name and honor of this Government," and that the name of Davis "will stand higher [and] burn brighter] than any in the country in the coming years.[483] The Southern public was understandably thrilled. For some, it probably seemed as though the entire South was freed and allowed to move on with the rest of their lives. The *Charleston Mercury*, which only a few years prior was one of Davis's harshest critics, announced that his release gave "almost universal satisfaction" to the people of the South.[484]

Although he was able to bask in the newfound love of the South, Davis was in dire financial straits upon his release. In 1869, a twenty-six-year-old Union veteran named Russell H. Conwell took a three-month trip throughout the South on behalf of the Boston *Daily Evening Traveller*. Though he met many friendly people during his trip, there were still many unreconstructed, some as close to the north as Alexandria, just across the Potomac from Washington, D.C. In the homes he visited, Conwell took note of the plethora of Confederate memorabilia and nostalgia, among them several portraits of Jefferson Davis.[485] Conwell's account demonstrates that the spirit of rebellion was alive and well in the South during Reconstruction, and Davis served as a central figure, one whom white Southerners looked toward for guidance and reassurance during their uncertain times.

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[482] Baltimore *Gazette*, republished in "Contents of the Press upon the Enlargement of Mr. Davis," *Richmond Dispatch*, May 15, 1867.
[483] Lynchburg *Republican*, republished in "Contents of the Press upon the Enlargement of Mr. Davis," *Richmond Dispatch*, May 15, 1867.
[484] Charleston *Mercury*, reprinted in *Yorkville Enquirer* (York, SC), May 23, 1867.
[485] Conwell's letters are published in Russell J. Conwell, *Magnolia Journey: A Union Veteran Revisits the Former Confederate States*, ed. Joseph C. Carter (Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 1974), 3, 7. In Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 154-55.

1870-1879: Hardships, Rebuilding, and the Battle of the Books

Davis's imprisonment and the 1860s were crucial in beginning the rehabilitation of his public memory. His anguish, bound in chains in a federal prison, endeared him to southerners who largely forgot or ignored the perception that Davis was to blame for defeat. Nevertheless, the early 1870s were some of the most difficult years of his life. He faced financial hardship, frequent illness, untimely deaths of family, and criticism from those who still believed him to be an enemy of the American people. The initial rehabilitation of his image while he languished in federal prison was achieved by his wife and other white southerners who appreciated his suffering on their behalf. However, it was Davis who mostly oversaw the alteration of his public perception. He gave speeches and wrote articles professing his belief that the Confederate cause was a noble one and one that deserved to be heard by the world. Alfred Roman, in an anonymous letter to the New Orleans *Daily Democrat* in 1878, called Davis "the living impersonation of 'the Lost Cause'" in 1878.[486] Many southerners, however, were not yet ready to re-embrace the Confederate cause and the painful memories of the war. As a result, Davis faced backlash for his oratory, and some of his enemies from the Civil War, notably Johnston and Beauregard, engineered attacks on his image through literary publications. These attacks, however, led some white southerners to argue that the white South needed its own reconciliation. As a result, they turned to Davis and his pro-Confederate rhetoric to assist with resolution.

From 1869 to 1873 he served as president of the Carolina Life Insurance Company. But the company folded and Davis again found himself without an income. As with most politicians of the nineteenth century, he spent much of his political career before the Civil War orating. When Davis was asked to speak at a meeting of the Confederate soldiers and sailors at the First

[486] "The Battle of Shiloh: The Battle Planned and Fought by Gen. G. T. Beauregard," New Orleans *Daily Democrat*, July 14, 1878, p. 2.

Presbyterian Church in Richmond regarding the establishment of the Lee Monument Association, it seemed that he may have rediscovered a career that suited him. A reporter stated that when Davis rose to give his speech to the congregation, a "storm of applause" that was "loud, long, and almost deafening," erupted from the crowd that seemed to shake the building's foundations.[487] Davis displayed his natural talent for public speaking, avoiding politics in this particular speech and instead focusing on the merits of Lee both as a general and a person. Needless to say, those in attendance were very pleased. Though this was the first public speech Davis gave since the end of the Civil War, the occasion marked a new avenue by which Davis could express romanticism of the Old South and the Confederacy.

Despite the support Davis received from many in the South due to his imprisonment, there was still plenty of animosity towards him on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line. Some believed that his renewed public persona was threatening to the stability of Reconstruction in the South. The Chicago *Times*, a leading Democratic journal, stated plainly that Davis's newfound role as a speaker was damaging to those in the South who sought to move on from their defeat. They criticized his rhetoric as something "not…what even the most enthusiastic rebels would call patriotism." Moreover, the *Times* groaned that he refused to "nurse his disappointment in private" and croaked "like an old magpie over the corpse of the Confederacy."[488]

The northern press viewed Davis's growing influence as a danger to the stability of the new United States. "If there is any one man more than an other [*sic*] who acted a leading and conspicuous part in the rebellion," A Pennsylvania newspaper cautioned, "and who is

[487] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American*, 588; Dunbar Rowland, ed. *Jefferson Davis: Constitutionalist*, VII, 281; originally reported in "The Memory of Lee," *Richmond Dispatch*, Nov. 4, 1870.
[488] "A Democratic Opinion of Jefferson Davis," *The New Berne Times* (New Bern, SC), originally printed in the Chicago *Times*, June 16, 1871.

now…moulding [*sic*] public sentiment in the South…that man is Jefferson Davis."[489] Northern newspapers were also quick to reprint any southern newspaper articles that criticized Davis in order to discredit his increasing prominence as an orator. One Richmond paper wrote that Davis was dredging up the painful past, and the southern people were ready to look forward, leaving the war behind and uniting with the Democratic party in the North.[490] The New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, criticized the people of the South for "badgering [Mr. Davis] for speeches" and for him breaking the silence of defeat.[491] These critiques certainly demonstrate a split in the southern populace about how to recover from their defeat. While arguably a majority chose to embrace the what-ifs of the war, others, like the *Enquirer* and *Times-Democrat* strove to bury the "corpse" of the Old South.

Despite the pushback from the North and some in the South, Davis continued his speaking engagements. This persistence not only promoted the legitimacy and righteousness of the Confederate cause, which further created support for what became the Lost Cause movement, but it also demonstrated that Davis was active in reconstructing his own image. By giving speeches about the Confederacy and its legacy, he was actively injecting himself into the conversation. Not only was he arguing that the cause was just, and secession was legal, he made sure that he was the one saying so. If the old, imprisoned Davis was the symbol of the Confederacy, the new Davis was one of the symbols of the new Lost Cause. In an August 1873 speech to the Southern Historical Society, Davis proclaimed, "We have been cheated rather than conquered, and could we have foreseen the results of the surrender [Reconstruction] we would

[489] "Jefferson Davis," *The Cambria Freeman* (Ebensburg, PA), June 17, 1871.
[490] From the *Richmond Enquirer*, reprinted in *The Cambria Freeman*, June 17, 1871.
[491] "Infelicitous," *The Times-Democrat* (New Orleans, LA), June 1, 1871, reprinted in *The Cambria Freeman*, June 17, 1871.

have been free to-day."[492] He later clarified that the "cheated" comment stemmed from the federal government's alleged assurances that the people of the South would have their rights and privileges restored if they peaceably laid down their arms.[493] The controversial statement created tensions between northerners and some southerners who believed the war should be kept in the past and others in the South who supported Davis and the ideas of the Lost Cause. But most importantly, Jefferson Davis made sure that Jefferson Davis was at the center of the discussion to preserve southern honor.

One of Davis's southern nemeses, Henry S. Foote, wrote a letter to the Washington *Chronicle* giving his opinion of Davis's comments. Unsurprisingly, Foote took the opportunity to criticize elements of Davis's speech, arguing that "if he means…that all the Southern ladies still cherish the spirit of rebellion, he certainly does them most cruel injustice." He also stated that Davis was doing a disservice to his fellow southerners by arguing for a second rebellion, and his words created a "faction with a vengeance" that threatened to tear the South apart.[494] Responding to the backlash a month later, Davis thought it strange that "a few remarks addressed to a few friends and associates…should be regarded as an address made to the public with any expectation of affecting political opinion."[495] Nevertheless, other southerners fought against the animosity towards Davis, often writing editorials and letters in their local newspapers. A person calling himself "Fair Play" authored an editorial condemning the criticisms of the northern press and the "serpent-like hissings of too many reconstructed Southerners." Fair Play rationalized that Davis was still popular amongst southerners because of the burdens he bore without fanfare. "History will yet plead [Davis's] cause…trumpet-tongued to the world," Fair Play proclaimed,

[492] *Army and Navy Journal, and Gazette of the Regular and Volunteer Forces*, XI, 25.
[493] Interview with the Memphis *Appeal*, in Davis, *Papers*, 13:157.
[494] Foote letter reprinted in *Reading Times* (Reading, Pennsylvania), Aug. 25, 1873.
[495] "Jeff. Davis Interviewed," *The Weekly Republican* (Plymouth, Indiana), Sept. 18, 1873.

adding that Davis's sacrifices and speeches demonstrated the worth of the thousands of southern lives lost during the Civil War.[496]

Jubal A. Early, the former Confederate general and prominent Lost Cause proponent, wrote to Davis on September 5 informing him he supported Davis's argument regarding the South having been "cheated" out of victory in the Civil War. Davis was referring to the federal government's abolition of southern state governments, the enfranchisement of African Americans.[497] These factors worked alongside other previously established excuses that Confederates used to cope with defeat, such as the argument purported by Lee that the southern armies were overwhelmed by superior northern numbers and resources. To Lee, the Confederacy did not lose on the battlefield because it was not good enough; it was due to factors beyond the armies' control. Davis filled in the rest of the gaps by highlighting ways in which the federal government interfered in the well-being of the South both during and after the war to create a strong message that southerners could later rally behind: the South was right, and any failure was not its fault. Many in the South, however, were not yet ready to listen to Davis's words, as the pain of defeat was still fresh in their minds. As a result, Davis's rhetoric and candor created a split among the white southern populace regarding what became the Lost Cause. At the same time, those loyal to Davis and the cause fought desperately to reunite the South by coming to terms with defeat and using that humiliation to strengthen the white supremacist agenda.[498]

The invitations for Davis kept flowing even after his controversial statements before the Southern Historical Society at White Sulphur Springs. He spoke widely in Texas, Missouri, and Kentucky to crowds numbering in the thousands. At a state fair in Houston, Davis honored

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[496] "Speech of Jefferson Davis before the Southern Historical Society," *Spirit of Jefferson* (Charles Town, West Virginia), Sept. 16, 1873.
[497] Early to *Petersburg Index and Appeal* (Petersburg, VA), Aug. 26, 1873, *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist*, 7:366.
[498] Interaction between Davis, Early, and the newspapers can be found in Rowland, ed. *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist*, 7:363-378.

veterans of the Texas Revolution and Confederacy. The latter soldiers reportedly wept as they shook Davis's hand. A huge crowd waiting for him at Austin spent hours in the rain. Cheering crowds at every stop along the way delayed his train.[499] Davis made several speeches in Missouri before he travelled to his birth state, Kentucky. Here Davis experienced an overwhelming reception. There was "a wild burst of affection – exceeding anything I ever had before," he wrote to Varina, "Bearded men who have served in battle, melt into tears and vainly try to express their love."[500] Perhaps the most important and telling comment about Davis came from General Richard Montgomery Gano, who introduced Davis to a Dallas crowd as a representation of the "great Confederacy." However, Gano specified that they were not honoring Davis "for his devotion to a lost cause, but to honor [his] moral worth and purity, worthy of emulation."[501] This marks an important distinction in Davis's grand welcomes. In this particular instance, the southerners who greeted Davis did not intend to perpetuate Lost Cause ideals but instead wanted to honor him for his sacrifices and dedication to the well-being of white southerners. Despite the warm receptions, Davis's political rhetoric was largely ignored.

Even so, he continued to actively perpetuate the Lost Cause in his speeches in the 1870s. On several occasions, he likened the Confederacy to that of the Thirteen Colonies in the American Revolution.[502] Perhaps most importantly for Davis in rehabilitating his own image was reasserting himself as a defender of states' rights and encouraging the white southern populace that they had done nothing wrong. Davis was the one telling them that they were "cheated" out of winning the war by factors out of their control, and he was the one comforting them that their

[499] Allen, *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart*, 522-23.
[500] Jefferson Davis to Varina Davis, October 9, 1875. In Jefferson Davis, *Jefferson Davis: Private Letters, 1823-1889*, ed. Hudson Strode (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), 418.
[501] Gano quotation in Francis Richard Lubbock, *Six Decades in Texas; or, Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock, Governor of Texas in War Time, 1861-63*, ed. C. W. Raines (Austin, TX: B. C. Jones & Co., Printers, 1900), 610.
[502] Speeches at Augusta, GA, May 25, 1871 and Atlanta, GA, May 27, 1871. Davis, *Papers*, 13:25, 32.

sacrifices would be eventually be worth it.[503] "We, of the South, have never been disunionists," Davis declared in 1879, "We were always the most steadfast friends of the Union as organized by the Constitution." He alleged that it was in the North that the ideas of nullification and secession arose, seemingly alluding to the War of 1812 or the Hartford Convention. "We resorted to them reluctantly…as a dire necessity, and not from choice or on light occasion."[504] Various speeches reinforced the belief in racial hierarchy of the South which no doubt appealed to whites in the wake of the amendments passed during Radical Reconstruction.[505] In August 1874 he railed against the North for upsetting "the natural relations of the races" which led to the violence present in the South. The next year, he proclaimed the goodness of the crowd, which was rooted in their "Anglo Saxon instinct." In 1879, he rejoiced that "Mississippi is again governed by Mississippians," alluding to the completed redemption of the white South.[506]

Despite some trepidation regarding the spread of pro-Confederate rhetoric, Davis was asked to speak publicly even within the North by the mid-1870s. Although some Yankees looked upon his growing influence as a danger to postwar relations between sections, Davis received two letters from the Winnebago Agricultural Society's Secretary Kimball, inviting him to speak in Columbus, Illinois on September 16, 1875. The first letter, postmarked July 18, urged Davis to accept the invitation on the guarantee that he would be "heard with pleasure" and that he would not regret his visit. Kimball pressed the issue two weeks later in a missive in which he upped the ante, promising "a grand ovation of forty thousand bearers" and five hundred dollars in

[503] In 1879, he hoped that the future generation of white southerners would "yet vindicate the principles which *we* failed to maintain." Speech at Pascagoula, MS, June 4, 1879. In Davis, *Papers*, 13:550
[504] Ibid., 551.
[505] The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime in the United States. The Fourteenth Amendment provided certain civil rights to freedmen and women. The Fifteenth Amendment prohibited the federal and state governments from denying a citizen the right to vote based on that citizen's race, color, or previous condition of servitude. In short, these amendments attempted to level the playing field for newly freed peoples.
[506] Speeches at Memphis, August 28, 1874, Houston, May 11, 1875, and Pascagoula, MS, June 4, 1879 in Davis, *Papers*, 13:237, 275, 550.

compensation. When Davis agreed, Kimball replied with delight that his appearance in western Illinois would "reinstate [Davis's] talent and statesmanship…and smother forever prejudice and animosity…" Despite his initial acceptance, Davis sent another letter declining the invitation, citing the potential for a poor reception due to "prejudices…generated by partisan factions and nurtured by sectional hate."[507]

Davis's invitation was met with hostility in some quarters, including the Grand Army of the Republic, which was made up of Union army veterans. However, there were plenty of Northerners who were upset with the critics. *The Daily Argus* of Rock Island, Illinois, condemned the combativeness of the *Rockford Gazette*'s treatment of Davis in the aftermath of his declination. They unfairly characterized the G.A.R. as "a sort of northern Ku Klux...not brave enough to fight, but devoted to keeping up the animosities of the war in a sneaking, under-handed way."[508] Col. John N. Edwards, of the St. Louis *Times,* also criticized the women of Winnebago County for their role in Davis declining the invitation. "We don't blame the women…so much for the fury which possessed them at the bare mention of the name of Jefferson Davis," his editorial opined, "The bulk of them, no doubt, had in their houses…pianos stolen from Mr. Davis's Mississippi neighbors, and silver spoons with names upon them as familiar to Mr. Davis's eyes as household words…"[509]

Major Emery S. Foster, editor of the St. Louis *Evening Journal* fought back against Edwards and the *Times* damning the insults hurled at the women of Winnebago County and proclaiming a partisan effort to curb such language. This, however, provoked Edwards to demand an apology from Foster. Ironically, Davis's insistence that his presence might sow

[507] Letters reprinted in "Jeff. Davis," *Memphis Daily Appeal*, Aug. 19, 1875.
[508] "Jeff. Davis Declines," *The Daily Argus* (Rock Island, IL), Aug. 18, 1875.
[509] "Idiotic Editors: Two Cowardly Braggarts Appeal to 'the Code of Southern Honor,' from *The Moline Review-Dispatch* (Moline, IL), Sept. 10, 1875. Reprinted from St. Louis *Times*.

regional animosity and subsequent declination itself fostered such sectional animosity. This exchange between editors demonstrated that Davis's image was still just as contentious in the public sphere as it was in 1865 when he was captured. Several years had passed, and there was still a debate regarding if Davis should be allowed to speak publicly as the former president of the Confederacy.

Although Davis eventually declined to speak in Illinois, there was no shortage of invitations from around the country, including Indiana, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Louisiana, and Maryland. Notably, many of these understandably promised his reception by thousands of attendees and, of course, monetary compensation. There were, however, often promises of sectional reconciliation tied into these talks. A letter from the Knox County Agricultural Board of Illinois boasted to Davis that the committee that selected him was made up of both Democrats and Republicans and, as such, citizens belonging to both parties would receive him during his speech.[510]

In addition to these numerous invitations, Davis was also offered ventures in the education sector of the South. An editorial in the *Austin Weekly Statesman* urged Davis to establish a university in Austin, Texas where each "denomination" had its own college and might contribute to the overall good of Texas and the rest of the South.[511] A second article in the same issue also stated that a Davis speech advocated for expanded independence of local government in Texas. Although fellow Austin newspapers the *News* and *Telegraph* barely mentioned the idea, the *Weekly Statesman* claimed that it became a seriously considered prospect once mentioned it, alluding to Davis's growing influence.[512]

[510] "Jeff. Davis," *Memphis Daily Appeal*, Aug. 19, 1875.
[511] "The Baptists, Episcopalians, and Mr. Davis," *The Austin Weekly Statesman*, June 3, 1875.
[512] "Mr. Davis and Texas Politics," *The Austin Weekly Statesman*, June 3, 1875.

Texas fought mightily for Davis to consider his permanent residence there in the mid-1870s. On June 1, 1875, the board of directors for the recently created Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, now Texas A&M, voted unanimously to offer him the position of its first president. Davis declined, but he was willing to confer with them about the educational system of Texas the next time he visited the state. The board moved on and appointed, William Falconer as president. Davis was discussed as the commencement ceremony speaker in 1878, but there is no record of the idea having been pursued past the initial board meeting resolution.[513]

Instead, Davis travelled to Tennessee in July that year to receive an honorary membership and badge in the Army of Tennessee from its veterans. In his speech, Davis continued his defense of states' rights and the legality of secession, declaring "it is little to assume that I shall die, as I have lived, firm in the State rights faith."[514] Following a familiar formula in his speeches, he praised the "patriotism" and "bravery" of the Confederate soldiers before urging "that our cause was not less dear or less worthy of a people's love."[515] Davis's address was well received. Former Confederate General Stephen D. Lee wrote to Davis that his young son "joined his father's exalted opinion of [him]."[516] Davis's lecture circuit was largely successful. He received much needed income and was able to reshape his image and role in the Civil War and postwar on his own terms. Although there were still some in the South who were not yet ready to hear his pro-Confederate rhetoric, by the end of the 1870s, it was clear that many white southerners began gravitating toward the tenets of the Lost Cause.

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[513] More detailed account of this process can be found in Arrowood's article, 293-95.
[514] Jefferson Davis, "Address of Hon. Jefferson Davis Delivered at Mississippi City July 10, 1878 upon the occasion of the presentation of Army of Tennessee Badge and Certificate of Membership to Mr. Davis," in Rowland, ed., *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist*, 8:229.
[515] Ibid., 8:233.
[516] S. D. Lee to Jefferson Davis, July 15, 1878, in Rowland, ed., *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist*, Vol. 8, 237.

The advocacy of Davis as a southern hero was also reinforced by an increasing number of memoirs published by Confederate veterans, especially high-ranking officers. Anecdotes were often shared that had no real bearing on Davis's ability to lead the Confederacy. Instead, many former associates regaled readers by highlighting sentimental tendencies Davis allegedly exhibited. At times, it is difficult to ascertain whether some episodes occurred or, if they did, whether they were written to be truthful or with an agenda to improve Davis's image. Richard Taylor's 1879 *Destruction and Reconstruction* recounted the death of his wife in 1875 and Davis's emotional support. "Mr. Davis came to my side, and stooped reverently to touch the fair brow, when the tenderness of his heart overcame him and he burst into tears," recalled Taylor, "For many succeeding days he came to me, and was as gentle as a young mother with her suffering infant."[517] Taylor also appealed to Davis's martyrdom when he reminisced about visiting Davis in prison. His description of Davis, "Palid, worn gray, bent, feeble, suffering from inflammation of the eyes…uttered no plaint, and made no allusion to the irons," offered an image of Davis enduring pain for the people of the South without objection.[518] Whether these episodes are factual or embellished, their specifically chosen language demonstrates a deliberate desire for readers to think a certain way about Davis.

Other memoirs were far more critical of Davis. This era of memoir publication led many veterans to attempt to vindicate themselves of their failures during the war. One of the more common tropes in these works was to lay blame on others in order to draw attention away from their own faults. Two of the most blatant abusers of this tactic were General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard and Joseph E. Johnston. Both of these men served as high-ranking officers and had a hatred for Davis that had festered for close to a decade by the mid-1870s. Their

[517] Richard Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879), 247.
[518] Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction,* 246.

abhorrence of Davis stemmed from the belief that the president frequently made political and military decisions based on personal grievances. In these instances, Beauregard and Johnston felt that Davis's personal distaste for them led him to remove them from their respective commands. Davis often countered by arguing that their pitiful personalities and poor military decisions were solely to blame for their wartime failures. One example was the reported power struggle during First Manassas in which Beauregard, his army having been merged with Johnston's, was promoted to full general and thus did not consider himself under Johnston's command. As a result, Beauregard and Johnston essentially each commanded half an army.[519]

Davis's distrust of Beauregard began in earnest at the battles of Shiloh and Corinth in the spring of 1862. Beauregard reported to Davis that he repulsed Union attacks at Shiloh after the death of Commander Albert Sidney Johnston, but instead he was in full retreat to Corinth, Mississippi. Beauregard then withdrew from Corinth, albeit outnumbered nearly two to one by Union forces, which likely led to Memphis' fall to the Union. Beauregard further damned himself in the eyes of Davis by initially assuring him he would hold Corinth "to the last extremity," before calling his retreat "a most brilliant and successful one."[520] The final straw was when Beauregard took a leave of absence for health reasons, but felt it unnecessary to ask permission or even inform Davis and the Confederate government. As a result, Davis refused any ideas of Beauregard assuming overall command of Confederate forces for the rest of the war, later characterizing Beauregard as a man "who can only walk a log when it is near ground."[521]

Johnston's feud with Davis began prior to Beauregard's. It was much pettier in its foundation, but Beauregard was arguably snider and blunter with his remarks. When the war

[519] James M. McPherson, *Embattled Rebel: Jefferson Davis as Commander in Chief* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2014), 44-46.
[520] McPherson, *Embattled Rebel*, 69.
[521] Letter from Jefferson Davis to Varina Howell Davis, June 13, 1862, in Cooper, Jr., ed., *Jefferson Davis: The Essential Writings*, 250-2.

began, the Confederate Congress had allowed for the appointment of five full generals. These positions were filled by Samuel Cooper, Albert Sidney Johnston, Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, and Beauregard. Johnston, understanding that he had been placed fourth on the ranking list, unloaded on Davis in a letter, arguing that the men ranked above him were subordinate to him before the war. He called Davis's ranking "studied indignity," a tarnishing of his "fair fame as a soldier and a man," and a "blow aimed at me only."[522] Johnston dropped the matter publicly for the good of the war, but his animosity festered under the surface until Davis was sent to federal prison.

The ranking controversy proved to be the first sign of animus between Davis and Johnston and reached a fever pitch in the fall of 1863. James McPherson argues that Davis accused Johnston of what amounted to dereliction of duties, and Johnston and his allies sought to undermine Davis in Congress and in the press in what became a "paper war."[523] Johnston's subsequent removal pushed his hatred of Davis to the level of "a religion." Although Johnston continued to assault Davis throughout the 1870s and 1880s, Davis was reluctant to fight back, heeding the advice of close friends, like Judah Benjamin, who argued that such infighting might harm reconciliation in the South. Still wishing to vindicate his stance, Davis typically allowed allies, who Cooper terms "surrogates," to fight on his behalf.[524]

Johnston further isolated himself from any semblance of Davis's good graces by his actions in the Atlanta campaign in 1864. Johnston's correspondence indicated that he had no desire to defend Atlanta in the face of Sherman's March, instead opting to conduct operations

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[522] Letter from Johnston to Davis, Sept. 12, 1861, *Official Records*, series 4, volume 1:605-8. From McPherson, 47. Davis later argued that Johnston's hostility toward him was the result of Davis's refusal to recognize him as superior in rank to Robert E. Lee with no mention of Cooper or A. S. Johnston. This hostility culminated in "gross misrepresentation" in Johnston's *Narrative* and was "crowned by his vile slander" regarding the Confederate treasure that Davis supposedly stole in 1865. Letter from Davis to George Washington Custis Lee, June 18, 1883. From, Davis, *Jefferson Davis: Private Letters, 1823-1889*, 526.
[523] McPherson, *Embattled Rebel*, 136-9.
[524] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American*, 623.

closer to that of guerrilla tactics. Davis believed that the loss of Atlanta might signal the end of the Confederacy, and so he replaced Johnston with John Bell Hood. Hood proved to be incompetent against Sherman, and Davis eventually restored Johnston to command in January 1865, but it was too late to save the Deep South.[525] Johnston's literary crusade to vindicate his own image began in the late 1860s, after Davis's release from prison. Although he tried, he was unable to effectively discredit Davis during his incarceration. After that, Johnston established the Joseph E. Johnston & Company whereby he was able to devote his time to his writing. In 1868, he wrote to his former corps and division commanders asking for their papers or simply their recollections. As Craig L. Symonds notes, Johnston quibbled with his men over their word choice and even suggested what they should write.[526] This seemed to be the beginning of Johnston's sometimes-absurd literary claims.

Beauregard also utilized Davis's incarceration to attack him publicly, as Davis had no way of defending himself.[527] But, as with Johnston, Beauregard was unable to turn public opinion against Davis. Undeterred, he continued to slander Davis even after he was released from prison, arguing that the president had "no elements of greatness about him."[528] Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, Beauregard often replied with divisive language to what he believed were provocative attacks by Davis in his speeches and writing. These tirades seemed to be part of Beauregard's ever-increasing mania regarding his military honor.

As Johnston worked on his memoir throughout the late 1860s and early 1870s, his ultimate goal was to restore his place as an important player in the Civil War and make villains

[525] McPherson, *Embattled Rebel*, 198-9.
[526] Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston*, 360.
[527] Davis was only permitted to correspond with his wife, Varina, and the subject matter of the letters had to pertain to family matters only.
[528] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American*, 623.

out of Davis and the Confederate government.[529] Essentially, Johnston felt that the best way to defend his reputation was to discredit Davis.[530] His *Narrative of Military Operations,* published in 1874, was a challenge to Davis's version of the war, which was becoming known through his speeches at Confederate reunions and memorials. It was more of a series of constant attacks on Davis's character and his actions as president than an actual narrative of military operations. There were some ex-Confederates that attempted to dissuade Johnston from publishing the book, claiming that it would discredit the Confederate cause.

Indeed, his *Narrative* was self-damning.[531] He alienated his friend, G. W. Smith, who believed that the book made Smith out to be a scapegoat for the loss of the war. Smith "attacked" Johnston's version with his own publications, although they were arguably more critical of Davis than they were of Johnston.[532] Despite the backlash Johnston received from his *Narratives,* he continued to attack Davis's memory throughout the 1880s, as he wrote articles for *Century* magazine's "Battles and Leaders" series. Southern newspapers reviewed Johnston's *Narrative,* and many praised Johnston's credentials as a general and commending the battlefield information found in the book. However, the editors tended to regard Johnston's constant attacks on Davis in a manner that demonstrated their neutrality as well as greater favor for Davis's contributions to the southern cause.

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[529] Johnston's issues with the Confederate government likely stemmed from an indiscriminate blending of his and his staff's issues with Davis and the perceived actions of the government. In a letter to W. T. Walthall, Davis argues that there was a letter sent for publication in England that was written by Dr. Yandell and was modified. Despite the modification to the letter, enough of the original letter was left to show that Yandell's purpose was to "magnify his Chief Genl. J. E. Johnston" by blaming the Confederate administration regarding an unknown war issues, possibly Johnston's struggles to retain his command throughout the war. From Cooper, Jr., ed., *Jefferson Davis: The Essential Writings,* 409.

[530] Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Jefferson Davis's Generals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 25.

[531] Upon hearing that Johnston's *Narrative* was poorly received, Davis wrote to Varina that "Johnston has more effectively than another could have shown his selfishness and malignity." From Wilmer L. Jones, *Generals in Blue and Gray, Vol. II* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 68.

[532] Allen, *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart,* 523-24.

One of the most outrageous claims Johnston made against Jefferson Davis was inadvertently revealed in an article in the *Philadelphia Times* in 1881. In an interview, which Johnston did not realize was an interview, he claimed that Davis had stolen what amounted to $2,500,000 from the Confederate treasury upon his escape from Richmond in 1865. Frank Burr asked what happened to the money to which Johnston responded, "That I am unable to say. Mr. Davis has never given any satisfactory account of it, and what is a strange thing to me, the Southern people here never held him to an account of it."[533] Johnston could produce no concrete evidence, this was the first time in which the president's honesty was truly called into question. Unsurprisingly, it drew a great backlash in the North and South.[534] Following the article's publication, Johnston wrote a letter to the *Philadelphia Times* claiming that there were inaccuracies in the printed interview, but his accusations were "neither firm nor explicit."[535] Despite this wild assertion, the specter of the theft chased Davis throughout the rest of his life.[536]

Ironically, Johnston's constant criticism and efforts in creating a Joe Johnston-friendly narrative of the Civil War alienated those who had been close to him. Fortunately, he was able toreplace them with new friends from the North such as William T. Sherman who came to respect Johnston as a man of great military intelligence and capability.[537] In the case of Sherman, esteem for and eventual friendship with Johnston was borne out of a common hatred of Davis as well as his respect for Johnston's military capabilities. This, in turn, manifested into criticism of Johnston's detractors – Hood and Davis. Sherman's first action in what was arguably his most bitter public feud was to laud Johnston and denigrate Davis in his 1875 *Memoirs*. To help his

[533] Ibid., 452.
[534] Ibid., 452.
[535] Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, *A Different Valor: The Story of General Joseph E. Johnston, C. S. A.* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1956), 385.
[536] Allen, 550. This claim is vaguely referenced years prior in a Philadelphia *Times* article from June 23, 1875.
[537] Symonds, 370.

friend, Sherman advertised Johnston's recently published *Narrative* on the back flyleaf of his book.[538]

At various times during the late 1870s and early 1880s, Sherman labeled Davis as a "monomaniac," "the impersonation of all that was wicked," and a species that ought to be "wiped off the face of the earth."[539] Perhaps taking a cue from Johnston's accusation of theft in 1881, Sherman also made an unverifiable claim against Davis in 1884. During a public lecture, Sherman argued that Davis had wanted the power to control the whole United States during the war, and if the Confederacy had won the Civil War, all of the Union veterans of the war would suffer. He argued that in this sense Davis was a "conspirator" and desired to "get a fulcrum from which to operate against the Northern States and to make Northerners slaves."[540] Furthermore, he claimed to have seen Davis's signature on a letter stating that he would have turned Lee's army against any state that attempted to secede from the Confederacy during the war, thus indicating that Davis already exhibited tyrannical ambitions and tendencies.[541] The "slaves" comment was probably a metaphor, but it nevertheless demonstrated Sherman's extreme dislike and distrust for Davis. Despite these outrageous charges, Sherman was ultimately unable to produce any of the evidence he claimed to have seen. Because of his inability to reconcile with old enemies, he continued to have disputes with Davis until he died in 1889.[542]

In 1878, William Preston Johnston, wrote a biography of his father. The younger Johnston charged that his father set the Confederacy up for victory at Shiloh, but Beauregard failed to order one final charge at the end of the battle's first day. Beauregard was enraged, and

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[538] Allen, *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart*, 524 and Strode, *Jefferson Davis: Tragic Hero*, 473.
[539] Michael Fellman, *Citizen Sherman: A Life of William Tecumseh Sherman* (New York: Random House, 1995), 304.
[540] Strode, *Jefferson Davis: Tragic Hero*, 471.
[541] Allen, *Jefferson Davis: Unconquerable Heart*, 550-1.
[542] Strode, *Jefferson Davis: Tragic* Hero, 472 and Fellman, *Citizen Sherman*, 304.

his furor increased when Davis made a speech that same year at Mississippi City repeating Johnston's argument.[543] Beauregard's close friend, Alfred Roman, wrote an anonymous letter to the New Orleans *Daily Democrat* in response. Arguing that Davis was at that point the purest embodiment of the Lost Cause, Roman lamented the fact that Davis's speech could influence so many southerners in believing a false narrative about Beauregard's actions at Shiloh. Since Mississippi City rested so close to the border, the speech was likely attended by Louisianans who might have felt slighted by Davis's and Johnston's sentiments regarding their statesman, Beauregard. Roman wrote two more articles in the proceeding weeks emphasizing both the slight committed by Davis and an assurance that his editorials were not intended to sow disunity in the South. "Unity in the South, especially at this hour, is, to our mind, an imperative necessity," wrote Roman. He routinely contradicted himself in his editorials by claiming that he desired to continue the feeling of unity in the South and did not want to constantly belabor minor details about the war and its leaders, but his writing promoted just such triviality.[544]

By the mid-1870s, much of the South had been redeemed with control handed back over to white Democrats and the very men that had led the Confederate government and military. Thus, the white southerners no longer had to rely on looking forward for hope; they began to concoct their own narrative of the war that strengthened their newfound identity within the Lost Cause myth. Southern publications such as the *Southern Historical Society Papers* indicated at least an official reverence for Davis and the Lost Cause. The *Papers* were a compilation of pro-Confederate articles and reports, and the opinions were generally respected by much of the white South. On the other hand, Johnston's *Narrative* and Beauregard's *Memoirs* embodied all traits that white southerners wished to avoid: defeat, embarrassment, and finger-pointing.

[543] "The Battle of Shiloh," New Orleans *Daily Democrat*, July 14, 1878, p. 2. Argument originally found in T. Harry Williams, *P. G. T. Beauregard: Napoleon in Gray* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1955), 308.
[544] Articles written in the New Orleans *Daily Democrat*, July 28, 1878 and August 11, 1878.

Their relentless attacks on Davis and blaming his government for failing the southern people no longer meshed with the Lost Cause's message. The war was a noble religious crusade for independence, fought for with devotion and sacrifice of all of its white citizens, which was overwhelmed by the large number of Union soldiers and their formerly enslaved allies. The divisive memoirs and letters written by Johnston and Beauregard endangered the reconciliation of southerners during the post-Civil War era. The late 1860s and early 1870s were defined by emotional instability for white southerners as they struggled to cope with defeat and humiliation at the hands of their northern rivals. Furthermore, this divisiveness in the memory of both the Civil War and Jefferson Davis demonstrated that the ability of the Lost Cause to take hold in the South was anything but a forgone conclusion.

1880-1889: Jefferson and Winnie Davis and Their Ascendancy into Lost Cause Heroism

The 1880s for Jefferson Davis were a peculiar time. His image had garnered the respect of most of the white South by the end of the 1870s. He had succeeded, for the most part, in his postwar career orating. The next step for him was to take up a literary voice to vindicate the Confederate cause and inject himself positively into the narrative of the war and the postwar. The 1870s saw the publication of many memoirs by former Confederates and Unionists, and this literary tidal wave forced the public to reexamine the memory of the war. Davis intended to begin writing his memoir as early as 1867, but the stress and pain stemming from the Confederacy's defeat prevented him from doing so.[545] In 1869, Davis agreed to work with his

[545] Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston*, 361.

wartime assistant, Preston Johnson, to create a memoir.[546] His initial working title was "Our Cause," out of a desire to convert others to the righteousness of the Confederacy's morals and actions. By 1875, Davis's relationship with Preston Johnston had soured, and he worked with former Confederate officer William T. Walthall to produce a contract for publication with D. Appleton & Company.[547]

In 1881, he completed his first major literary endeavor, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*. Die-hard Confederates praised the book for its antebellum rhetoric and support of states' rights. There were some, mostly in the North, that felt this line of thinking threatened to undo any progress that had been made toward reconciliation in the previous years. Although white southerners were somewhat on the fence about Davis's popularity and rhetoric in the 1870s, they began to readily embrace it in the 1880s, particularly with the publication and their vindication in *Rise and Fall*. This sentiment continued through his lone public tour of the South in 1886 and 1887, but much of it was quickly forgotten when he died in 1889. In a relatively short amount of time, Davis went from being a reviled caricature of femininity to one of the South's most beloved leaders and a symbol strong enough to perpetuate Lost Cause ideals.

Davis's *Rise and Fall* was instrumental in the reconstruction of his image. It allowed him to recreate the narrative of his involvement in the Civil War and the righteousness of the Confederate cause on his terms. Using his literary podium and widespread readership to his advantage, he spelled out the legality of secession and the sanctity of states' rights, ideas he had spoken about for years after his incarceration. Now these ideas were in print for the entire country to read and, as Davis believed, agree with. Several times he referred to the North's

[546] William Preston Johnston was the son of Albert Sidney Johnston, one of the most lauded generals of the Confederacy. The elder Johnston died at the battle of Shiloh which is how Beauregard came to command the army and eventually retreat from Shiloh and Corinth.
[547] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American*, 614-616.

breaking a legal compact by their refusal to obey the Fugitive Slave Act.[548] He also emphasized that slavery had nothing to do with the war, and it was the aggressiveness of the federal government that forced the South to act. "The truth remains intact and incontrovertible," Davis wrote, "that the existence of African servitude was in no wise the cause of the conflict, but only an incident."[549] As David W. Blight argues, *Rise and Fall* "may be the longest and most self-righteous legal brief on behalf of a failed political movement" ever written by an American. [550] William J. Cooper further defined it as "his monument to his cause."[551]

The federal government or the North, Davis seemingly used them interchangeably, drew a large portion of his ire. He argued that the North refused to accept the constitutionally legal secession of the southern states which led to the destruction of food, railroads, and homes in the South. Seemingly harkening back to the accusations of poor treatment of Union prisoners against him in the 1860s, Davis attacked the Union's treatment of the "brave and heroic soldiers" of the Confederacy. He cited statistics that more Confederate than Union soldiers died in prison and argued that the South was much more righteous in its treatment of captives, especially considering their lack of supplies.[552]

He castigated the North for being the aggressors in the war as well as criticizing the prisoner exchange policies to make the Yankees seem crueler and more sadistic, arguing that it demonstrated the "true character and intentions" of Lincoln's government. He chastised Lincoln's call for "loyal citizens" in the form of the first 75,000 volunteers and claimed that loyalty only existed in empires or kingdoms. In a republic, Davis added, people were

[548] Davis, *Rise and Fall,* 1:167, 177; 2:299.
[549] Ibid., 1:80.
[550] Blight, *Race and Reunion,* 259.
[551] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American,* 619.
[552] For both arguments, see Davis, *Rise and Fall,* 2:606-07.

sovereign.[553] Instead, Lincoln engineered the "bloody war of subjugation" in order to cover his "flagrant disregard for the Constitution."[554] This point was undoubtedly popular with white southerners still clinging to their belief in autonomy. Most importantly, two full-length volumes afforded Davis a more prolonged diatribe that he had not enjoyed in his speeches during the 1870s.

The *Memphis Daily Appeal* applauded Davis's book, arguing that he "successfully defend[ed]" the Constitutionality of secession with the "freedom of an honest, unrestrained pen."[555] Southern audiences were drawn to his aggressive defense of the Southern cause and the sacrifices of Confederate soldiers.[556] The *Southern Historical Society Papers* called the book a "rare power" in the "noble and triumphant defense of the Confederate cause."[557] The first edition of *Rise and Fall* sold all of its 25,000 copies, and a second edition was almost immediately ordered.[558] One southern newspaper boasted that it was the first "comprehensive" defense of the Confederate cause, arguing that it would stand out amongst "special and narrow" historical works published by other former Confederates. "Gen. [Joseph E.] Johnston's is a story of a campaign…told somewhat peevishly," the *Daily Review* derided. Surely Davis must have relished the small victory over his rival.

Few northern newspapers officially reviewed Davis's book, perhaps as a protest to his writing it or their desire for reconciliation. The few northerners who reviewed *Rise and Fall* mostly criticized Davis for injecting himself into the public sphere with his divisive rhetoric

[553] Davis, *Rise and Fall*, 2:581.
[554] Ibid., 2:624.
[555] "Jefferson Davis's 'Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government,'" *Memphis Daily Appeal*, June 8, 1881.
[556] "The Coming Book," *Goldsboro Messenger* (Goldsboro, NC), Feb. 24, 1881;
[557] *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. 9 (June 1881): 285-88.
[558] *Alabama Beacon* (Greensboro, AL), April 8, 1881.

rather than commenting upon the contents of the book.[559] The New York *Tribune* argued that most Americans in the last twenty-five years have dedicated themselves to living in the present. Instead, "Mr. Davis sits quarreling with the accepted solution of a problem of the past, which is an absurd and profitless thing to do, but one which furnishes a very interesting study in psychological pathology."[560] The idea that Davis was a man living in the past and out of touch with reality was a common theme in those newspapers that did review *Rise and Fall*.[561] Even more so, the celebration of the Confederacy and the willful ignorance of facts set a dangerous precedent for future generations, and Davis was at the forefront of the propagation of false information. Despite the trepidation from northerners and some southerners who feared divisive rhetoric, Davis's book sold extremely well in the South.

Some white southerners dreaded Davis's "intolerant spirit" might control his writing process and *Rise and Fall,* resulting in its following the same vein as Johnston's and Beauregard's works. As a result, many were concerned that the infighting of the Confederate administration, rhetoric so divisive in the 1870s, might continue to split the white South in the 1880s.[562] The Knoxville *Daily Chronicle* groaned that he was "a lively corpse and sa[id] some things that…do not hurt the Republican party" and risked reinvigorating the former rebel faction.[563] Clearly the literary infighting in the South was still a sensitive topic. Although Johnston was not willing to make an official public statement regarding what he believed to be

[559] See *Buffalo Morning Express and Illustrated Buffalo Express*, June 9, 1881; *Boston Post,* Aug. 22, 1881; *Buffalo Evening News*, June 6, 1881 reprinted a clever poem regarding Davis's book from the New York *Commercial*: "Jeff Davis writes his "Rise and Fall," But he does not write it right at all; His "rise" should be by halter high, His "fall," deep in the grave to lie; If he had had his proper "rise." He'd net have written all those lies; To prove his "fall" has righteous been, He now lets fall his lying spleen; His efforts o'er he'd better die, Then in his grave he'll harmless lie."
[560] "New Publications," New York *Tribune,* July 8, 1881.
[561] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American,* 620.
[562] "'Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government,'" the *Daily Review* (Wilmington, NC), Jan. 24, 1881.
[563] Knoxville *Daily Chronicle,* Jan. 24, 1882.

falsehoods in *Rise and Fall*, he was more than willing to make a few "hasty and informal" remarks to reporters who interviewed him.[564]

Despite white southerners' trepidation, *Rise and Fall* was largely devoid of hostile remarks toward his internal enemies. In fact, very rarely in the 1880s did Davis dredge up the past and attempt to tarnish his enemies' reputations publicly. He initially accepted an invitation from Jubal Early to speak at the dedication of the Lee mausoleum in 1883, but when he learned Joe Johnston was to preside over the event, he withdrew.[565] It turned out, however, that Johnston was sick and could not attend, thus John W. Daniel became the only speaker. Davis, however, did shoot a few barbs at his detractors, often off the cuff in formal addresses. During the unveiling of a statue to Albert Sidney Johnston on April 6, 1886, Davis indirectly attributed the loss at Shiloh to Beauregard's mismanagement. Unsurprisingly, Beauregard unleashed a four-column tirade in the *Picayune* detailing the approval of his movements by Johnston, which Davis claimed had been lost.[566] Although Beauregard was technically correct in his rebuttal, it was nonetheless unproductive for anyone in the South but Beauregard. However, his typical reserve in public demonstrated a resolve to keep southern infighting within the private sphere.

Davis capitalized on the notoriety he gained from his occasional speaking appearances in the 1870s and sought to gain more public attention. Prior to the 1880s, he had only given singular speeches stemming from invitations from veterans' groups or other smaller entities. In April 1882, J. William Jones approached Davis to embark on a southern speaking tour on behalf of the Southern Historical Society which had been established in 1869. The Society was well-known for collecting any and all materials related to the history of the Confederacy, and it was the publisher of the *Southern Historical Society Papers*. It did not really take off as a major

[564] "Bluff Joe Johnston," *Memphis Daily Appeal*, June 12, 1881.
[565] Cooper, Jr., *Jefferson Davis, American*, 624-25.
[566] "A Reply to Jeff Davis," New York *Times*, April 16, 1886.

organization until the late 1870s, so Jones's appeal to Davis was a plea to spread the influence of the SHS and thus the Lost Cause.[567] Davis, still nervous about his public image, agreed to speak once in New Orleans. Before the crowd, he promoted the need of the white South to preserve the record of its past and praised the efforts of the SHS in preserving Confederate history.[568]

Due to his popularity, Davis agreed to a southern speaking tour for 1886 that spilled over into 1887. The tour's conception began when the Montgomery, Alabama citizens' committee asked Davis to help dedicate the laying of a Confederate monument cornerstone on the Alabama statehouse grounds on April 29, 1886.[569] Davis continued to preach the righteousness of the Confederate cause to the crowds that greeted him. He described the laying of the cornerstone of a Confederate monument as a "sacred task" for a remembrance of those who "gave their lives…in defense of the rights of their sires won in the War of the Revolution – the State sovereignty, freedom and independence, which was left us as an inheritance to their posterity forever."[570] While Davis argued that his words were not meant to fan the fires of sectional hate, he also stated that he did not seek to avoid the responsibility attached to the belief in the righteousness of the cause and "the virtue of those who risked their lives to defend it."[571] New South advocates sought Davis out prior to the Montgomery ceremony and insisted that he travel to Atlanta immediately afterwards to participate in the dedication of a monument to former Confederate senator Benjamin H. Hill. Davis agreed.[572]

The receptions Davis enjoyed indicated that his pro-Confederate rhetoric was not as inflammatory as they seemed a decade earlier. White southerners on the tour largely celebrated

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[567] See Cox, *Dixie's Daughters* and Richard D. Starnes, "Forever Faithful: The Southern Historical Society and Confederate Historical Memory," *Southern Cultures*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1996): 177-194.
[568] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 92.
[569] "Alabama Soldiers' Monument," New York *Times*, March 30, 1886.
[570] "Speech in Montgomery," April 29, 1886, in Davis, *Papers* 14, 307.
[571] Davis, *Papers*, 308.
[572] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 95.

his appearances and the praise he heaped upon them as proponents of the Confederate cause and the values of the Old South. Indeed, the New York *Times* wrote that in Montgomery, Davis was cheered by reportedly ten thousand "as a reminiscence of the past, not as a figure of the present."[573] The *Times* eloquently summarized Davis's role in white southern lives: a reminder of the South that they were forced to leave behind with their defeat in the Civil War. The people of Alabama were eager to relive their Confederate past in the presence of the man who once led their perceived crusade for freedom, and "Three cheers for Jeff Davis!" echoed down the line of civilians. "It would be an insult to the dead and an outrage to the Southern manhood if Mr. Davis should not be honored above all living men in the South," the Montgomery *Daily Dispatch* declared. Once again, Davis's rhetoric stirred old feelings of Confederate pride and nostalgia among white southerners. Some newspapers also evoked images of Davis in chains from his prison term. Exaggerated as the initial reports of his imprisonment were in 1865, they nevertheless continued to instill loyal fervor among ex-Confederates.[574]

Davis was greeted by throngs of supporters in small towns on the way from Montgomery to Atlanta.[575] At a stop in Eufala, Alabama, Davis's caravan was greeted with "wild enthusiasm" and an African American band playing "Dixie."[576] Despite his warm welcome throughout Alabama, the New York *Times* reported that certain crowds in Georgia were less than enthused by Davis's presence. Many Georgians who welcomed Davis were unnerved by his talk of the "old cause." The *Times* speculated that they were averse to bringing up old issues that threatened to endanger business interests that were facilitated by Reconstruction. Although the women of the South reportedly latched on to the message, many worried that their subsequent teaching of

[573] "Dixie Reigns Supreme," New York *Times*, April 29, 1886.
[574] *Daily Dispatch* (Montgomery, AL), April 28, 1886.
[575] See *Atlanta Constitution*, April 22 and 27 and May 1, 1886.
[576] Jefferson Davis's Tour: An Enthusiastic Reception at Eufala, Ala.," New York *Times*, May 10, 1886.

the Lost Cause to their children may be problematic, for "it is the rising generation…on whom will rest the responsibility for the future of the South."[577] Some old Confederates and southern papers were disenchanted with the tour, arguing that it was undignified or complained that it brought up painful memories.[578]

However, the 1886-1887 tour was a success as his presence was appreciated by most white southerners, and they used the opportunity to reaffirm their self-respect.[579] Davis and the tour organizers leaned on the tenets he had long proclaimed: the righteousness of the Confederate cause, the legality of secession, and that southern men who died for the Confederacy were heroes. The organizers also engendered sympathy for Davis by reaffirming his suffering in federal prison on behalf of the white South. In LaGrange, Georgia, the Davis train bore the slogan "He Was Manacled for Us," and onlookers scattered flower petals in front of the carriage.[580] "This moment in this blessed Easter week," one organizer announced in Atlanta, "witnessing the resurrection of these memories that for twenty years have been buried in our heart, has given us the best Easter that we have seen since Christ was risen from the Dead."[581] Were these comments hyperbolic? Almost certainly. They did, however, demonstrate that Jefferson Davis was right in the center of the emerging Lost Cause. Davis himself benefitted greatly from the tour. It reassured him and the rest of the South that he was one of their true champions and would be remembered as a hero in their eyes.

Varina Davis had long been a key ally in reshaping Jefferson's public image. She toiled endlessly for him during his incarceration, calling in numerous favors from prominent friends around the country. Even when she became disillusioned with his inability to find a steady

[577] "Davis Cheered No More," New York *Times,* May 5, 1886.
[578] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 96.
[579] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 266.
[580] Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 246; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 266.
[581] Raymond Nixon, *Henry W. Grady: Spokesman of the New South* (New York: Knopf, 1943), 228-31.

income in the early 1870s and left him, she returned and supported him while completed his magnum opus, *Rise and Fall*. Varina tended to remain in the background during the 1880s. She occasionally attended public functions with Jefferson, but often declined. Since she did not enjoy living back in Mississippi, Varina was often away, but remained still supportive of her husband and family. She dearly missed the life she experienced in Washington as a senator's wife. As late as 1883, she informed her close friends, the Blairs, that she hoped to grow old with them in Washington amongst her "beloved circle" of friends.[582] She tended to take care of the writing when fan letters, historical queries, and family missives came in for Jefferson to read. She was also content with her role in the domestic sphere. When Jefferson and Winnie returned from the 1886 tour, both exhausted and ill, she nursed them back to health.[583] While Varina was not the driving force behind her husband that she was in the late 1860s, she still served a purpose in physically propping up Davis and spreading his good graces through writing letters.

As Jefferson Davis regaled many white Southerners with his nostalgic rhetoric, his daughter, Winnie, acted as a younger symbol of what her father proclaimed. Winnie's role in reshaping Jefferson's image was quite different than Varina's. Varina Anne Davis, nicknamed "Winnie," was born in 1864, the last year of the Civil War. Born in the Confederate White House, Eron Rowland later remarked that she should be set apart as a kind of shrine at which those below the Mason-Dixon Line should worship."[584] Heath Hardage Lee echoed these sentiments by claiming that the birth of Winnie was seen as a good omen for the struggling Confederate forces.[585] Her continuous presence at her father's side throughout his later life

[582] Varina Davis to Elizabeth [Minna] Blair, 24 July 1883, Blair Family Papers, Library of Congress. In Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 255.
[583] Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 247.
[584] Eron Opha Moore Rowland, *Varina Howell, Wife of Jefferson Davis* (New York: Macmillan, 1927-1931), 506.
[585] Heath Hardage Lee, *Winnie Davis: Daughter of the Lost Cause* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 15.

created an inseparable bond between her and the values and memories of the Confederacy and their Civil War.[586] When Davis went to speak, and Winnie was at his side, white southerners were instantly reminded of her having been born in the Confederate White House prior to the tumult of the New South era.

Winnie accompanied her father during his speaking tour, and she was instantly catapulted into the spotlight by former Confederate General John B. Gordon. At the Montgomery ceremony, the general referred to her as the "daughter of the Confederacy," and the name followed her for the rest of her life. She served as a symbol of hope to defeated and still unreconstructed southerners, and, according to scholar Gaines M. Foster, her very existence erased the question of Jefferson Davis's manhood and instead demonstrated his virility and, consequently, their own.[587] Winnie also explicitly reassured southern men of their manhood and insisted that it never left them. Often clothed in white dresses, Winnie was also forced to play the role of pure and perfect young southern womanhood. As Blight argues, she "became a gendered icon of the social order – the cause and the future – for which Southern white men had fought."[588]

[586] Lee, *Winnie Davis*, 165-66.
[587] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 97.
[588] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 266.

Figure 4: Varina Anne "Winnie" Davis portrait by John P. Walker[589]

Winnie's name was highlighted on newspaper headlines throughout the South after her father's tour. Editors were eager to teach their readers about the "daughter of the Confederacy," with many offering up "portraits" of Winnie's personality and her role as a new public figure representative of the bridge between the Old and New South.[590] She attended numerous Confederate ceremonies throughout the late 1880s, and performed rituals that reinforced southern pride about their past and hope for their future. In one instance, Winnie and her sister were introduced at an event in Winnie's honor in Macon, Georgia in 1887, and the sisters kissed the folds of a Confederate flag.[591]

[589] John P. Walker, "Portrait of Varina Anne 'Winnie' Davis, circa 1897," Virginia Historical Society. This image is public domain.
[590] See *Richmond Dispatch*, Sept. 21, 1886; *Austin American-Statesman*, Nov. 18, 1886; *Times-Picayune*, Nov. 3 and 19, 1886; *Huntsville Independent*, Dec. 2, 1886; *Union Springs Herald*, Dec. 8, 1886;
[591] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 97.

Winnie became hugely popular among the white population of the country. She was routinely asked for photos and autographs, and people frequently travelled to meet her rather than her father. When Winnie took a trip to Syracuse in 1886, she was initially shunned by some northerners, but she found welcoming arms in the city.[592] Some were not as enamored with her allure. The Boston *Herald* criticized the southern reverence of her, arguing that she "wasn't born when the cruel war broke out, and she wasn't knee-high to a grasshopper when it was all over. Winnie has winning eyes, and wears a sweet expression, but she isn't big enough for a great national issue."[593] During her trip to Syracuse, she met and became engaged to Alfred Wilkinson, the grandson of abolitionist Samuel May, in 1890 after her father's death. This created animosity in the North and South. Southerners were outraged that she considered sullying her family and her regional identity. "The very sleeping dead Southern soldiers would rise from their graves," one anonymous letter proclaimed, "ere they would see the daughter of Jefferson Davis ruined, and shame-covered forever."[594] Despite the backlash, Winnie went through with the marriage. Though she died young at age 34, she served as an important reminder of Confederate pride during the 1880s by herself and as an extension of her father.

The excitement of the last few years certainly took a toll on the older Davis. Throughout his postwar life, Davis frequently succumbed to illness, likely due to the stresses he encountered. Ill in prison, he was often attended to by physicians, and he continued to come down with maladies, primarily bronchitis, during the 1870s. His old age and traveling in the late 1880s finally pushed his health over the edge. His public appearances dwindled to nearly nothing by 1888, but he did make one final speech in Mississippi City that year. While he casually

[592] "Miss Winnie Davis," *The Times-Picayune*, Dec. 15, 1886.
[593] Boston *Herald*, reprinted in *Choctaw Herald* (Butler, AL), Nov. 4, 1886.
[594] Anonymous letter, June 10, 1890. In Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 121.

mentioned the same themes he had been preaching for nearly twenty years, he also looked to the future of the South and advocated for reconciliation with the North. "The past is dead," Davis announced, "let it bury its dead, its hopes and its aspirations." He urged the younger generation of the South to move forward and help unite the country "before which all the world shall stand amazed." He finished his final public speech with this: "Let me beseech you to lay aside all rancor, all bitter sectional feeling, and to make your places in the ranks of those who will bring about a consummation devoutly to be wished – a reunited country."[595] In December 1889, during a trip to New Orleans, Davis fell ill and died. Though his passionate defense of states' rights was off-putting to some, his legacy after death became that of a southern hero to the point of earning a spot on what became Stone Mountain, the massive stone monument in Georgia. The South was draped in black at the news of Davis's passing. Much of Dixie offered up the same rhetoric that had been used to honor white southern heroes like Jackson and Lee when they died. The public reaction to Davis's death was about what one might expect. Southern newspapers exalted him and used such phrases as "beloved chief" to describe his role in society.[596] Northern press reactions were mostly mixed; some were neutral, yet respectful notices of his death. Others made sharp jabs, like the New York *Times* which called him a failed war leader and the embodiment of the old planter elite.[597]

By the end of his life, Davis embodied the mentality of the Confederate white South – a firm belief in states' rights, the inferiority of African Americans, and the legal and moral necessity of secession. His words and actions created divides within white southern society that forced many to reconsider their own identities. By rejecting reconciliation on northern terms, he

[595] "Speech of Jefferson Davis, made at Mississippi City, Miss., in 1888," in Rowland, ed., *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist,* Vol. 10, 47-48.
[596] "The National Shame," *Atlanta Constitution,* Dec. 7, 1889.
[597] New York *Times*, Dec. 9 and 12, 1889. In Cashin, *First Lady of the Confederacy*, 265.

became stuck in the past. But his preaching of Lost Cause rhetoric also enabled white southerners to look toward the future. Davis became one of the most prominent Lost Cause rhetoricians and actively helped spread its tenets in the public sphere. By the time of his death, many white southerners were able to recreate their identities as calm, silent believers of the Lost Cause. The widespread mourning of Davis throughout the South surprised J.L.M. Curry, who "hardly anticipated such unanimity, but [Davis] was *the* representative of the 'Lost Cause.'"[598] Davis may not have ended his physical existence as the ideal Southern man like Robert E. Lee, but he was the truest embodiment of the Lost Cause and Confederacy and helped usher in a new era of white southern identity.

* * *

Jefferson Davis's incarceration was necessary for the rehabilitation of his image. In the minds of many southerners, he had failed to guarantee their independence and was thus seen as a scapegoat for the plethora of factors working against the Confederacy. By going to prison, he sacrificed his physical and mental well-being for the white South, and they soon realized his dedication to them and their cause. His oratory and writing of the 1870s further proved his loyalty to the South by his defense of states' rights and the perpetuation of the Lost Cause, although many southerners were not yet willing to accept the Lost Cause due to the hope of reconciliation. By the 1880s, that view had taken hold firmly in the South, and Davis stood as one of its prominent proponents, further propelling him into stardom.

[598] Quoted in Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 98.

Chapter Four:

The Confederate Triumvirate, the Lost Cause, and White Supremacy: 1890-1940

The decade of 1890s was a new era for the South. Jefferson Davis died in 1889. Lee and Jackson had been dead for decades. Jackson, the Christian soldier, gave his life for the cause in 1863. Lee, the noble soldier and educator, used up his last years molding a new generation of white, southern, young men to exhibit traits of the Old South in the era of the New South. And, Davis, the martyr and former president, continuously fought back against perceived northern oppression and helped instill pride in the Confederacy and support for white supremacy. After they died, white southerners were free to interpret their memories and images in ways that, more often than not, rebranded them as true American patriots. Their support for the institution of slavery was frequently swept under the rug. At other times, however, the men (especially Davis) were lauded as protectors of white supremacy.

At the turn of the century and the years after, white southerners sought to lessen the role of slavery as the cause of the Civil War, alter the narrative of the war that lionized the South's supposed fight against northern oppression, and affirm that the South's cause was righteous and legal in the realm of memory. Jackson, Lee, and Davis were each useful in this endeavor. Jackson was the Christian crusader who achieved great victories against the evil Union forces. Lee also fought against the northern armies, but he also helped usher in an age of peace after the war by educating southern youth and advocating for them to tell their side of the war narrative.

Davis instilled Confederate pride and the righteousness of the Confederate cause in the white South with his rhetoric and public speaking.

By the early 1900s, numerous monuments and public remembrances were erected across the South by memorial organizations. Southern women played a vital role in erecting these monuments and perpetuating the memory of the Confederate cause. Varina Davis and Mary Anna Jackson, the widows of Jefferson and Stonewall, respectively, also played key roles in altering the memories of their deceased husbands. Varina and Mary Anna authored biographies of their husbands that attacked their critics and defended and excused their mistakes. By eliminating their husbands' mistakes and character flaws, these women effectively polished their images, and presenting them as cleaner and nobler.

African Americans were very perceptive regarding the memorialization of the Confederacy and its heroes in the decades after the Civil War. By 1890, Jim Crow had begun to take shape in the South, and it eventually disenfranchised and dispossessed black southerners in nearly all walks of life. To black commentators, the memorialization of the Confederacy and the subversion of African American civil rights were intertwined. The erection of monuments and glorification of Confederate exploits threatened to perpetuate the themes of racism and slavery African Americans were keenly aware that the veneration of the Confederacy in the New South era threatened to undermine their civil rights. If the North no longer perceived slavery as a vital pillar of the Civil War era strife, the plight of African Americans was in danger of being forgotten. African Americans were understandably quite patriotic after the Civil War. Having earned their freedom with the Union's victory, many African Americans felt a strong loyalty to the United States. Consequently, the continued reverence of the Confederacy not only insulted

the patriotic actions that led to black freedom, but it also helped eliminate the crime of slavery from the public mind. This, in turn, allowed Jim Crow to take hold in the South.

The Confederate Triumvirate in Monuments and Memorials

Numerous Confederate monuments and memorials were established in the decades after the Civil War, but the 1890s and early decades of the 1900s saw an explosion of unveilings and dedication ceremonies. From 1890 to 1910, 280 monuments to the Confederacy were erected around the country. There had only been 79 established prior to 1889. Despite the large number of Confederate memorials, only 20 of them honored Jackson, Lee, and Davis, specifically, and Jackson was the subject of only one.[599] As was the case in nearly all the unveilings of Confederate memorials, and fundraising pamphlets to erect the monuments, the presiders and guest speakers regaled the large crowds with stories of the battlefield and profiles of the subjects of the monuments. Although Jackson, Lee, and Davis were not always the subjects of the monuments themselves, the orators often mentioned them and their heroism. These orators were former Confederate officers, politicians, and prominent rhetoricians. They perpetuated the beliefs of the Lost Cause in order to keep the memories of these three men and the Confederacy alive.

The people who erected these monuments were largely women. Ladies Memorial Associations, and later the United Daughters of the Confederacy, were instrumental in memorializing Confederate leaders and the cause across the American landscape. As Karen L. Cox puts it, "women were longtime leaders in movement to memorialize the Confederacy…it

[599] Data retrieved from "Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy," *Southern Poverty Law Center*, February 1, 2019. For another analysis of Confederate monuments and their meanings, see John J. Winberry, "'Lest We Forget': The Confederate Monument and the Southern Townscape," *Southeastern Geographer* 23, no. 2 (November 1983): 107-121.

can be argued that women founded the Confederate tradition."[600] Caroline E. Janney further claims that the reburial and memorialization of the Confederate dead by the LMAs constituted their "remaking a military defeat into a political, social, and cultural victory for the white South."[601] Although Ladies Memorial Associations (LMA) were the first organizations to establishment monuments to their fallen men in the form of memorial cemeteries, it was the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) that led a nationwide crusade to memorialize the Lost Cause. Founded in 1893, the group became extremely popular among southern women for their goal to broaden memorial exercises by erecting monuments in the public sphere.

Soon after the UDC's founding, LMA officers began to advocate for coalescence into the new UDC. As a result of this coalescence, the UDC's membership had already grown to 30,000 by 1902. Most of the women who made up the UDC's membership were the second generation of female Lost Cause advocates. Their mothers started and participated in LMA activities, and the UDC gave them their opportunity to continue the Confederate tradition.[602] Social status played a role in women's desire to join the UDC, but most of them joined out of a genuine yearning to more publicly memorialize the Lost Cause and alter the narrative of the Civil War to ease the pain of defeat. One UDC member, Virginia Redditt Price, referred to the UDC's work as a "sacred obligation" to Confederate soldiers and future generations of southern youth.[603]

The UDC were excellent fundraisers. Shortly after Jefferson Davis's death, Confederate organizations agreed that a monument to their president was needed. The United Confederate Veterans took charge on the project by establishing the Jefferson Davis Monument Association.

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[600] Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2019), 25-26.
[601] Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 3.
[602] Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 45-46.
[603] Virginia Redditt Price, "Why I Am a UDC," *Our Heritage* (September 1913): 2.

By 1899, the UCV had raised nearly $20,000, but it was believed that they were still far short of the amount of money needed to build a monument that satisfactorily honored him. The UDC was successful in memorial fundraising at the local level, so the JDMA's chairman, General W. L. Cabell, enlisted the "noble women of the South" to help raise the remaining funds. He felt that their presence was crucial otherwise the JDMA would "never achieve success."[604] From that point on, the UDC largely commanded the fundraising for monuments, and their male counterparts usually served as advisers.

Monuments were the most visual avenue for perpetuating the Confederate tradition. Prior to the establishment of the UDC, most Confederate memorials were housed in cemeteries or the cemeteries themselves.[605] As such, only people who visited those cemeteries interacted with those memorialized there. The UDC wished to broaden that memorialization by erecting monuments in the public sphere – places where everyone would see the statues and remember and honor the Confederate tradition, such as city streets or courthouse lawns.[606] John Winberry's excellent study of Confederate monuments concluded that approximately 93 percent of the monuments erected in the public spaces, such as courthouses or parks, were built after 1895.[607] Around half of those were unveiled between 1903 and 1912.[608] One important distinction about the erection of public monuments was the meaning behind them. Numerous historians have written excellent analyses of these monuments and their ultimate meaning: power. Fitzhugh Brundage wrote that these public monuments of the late nineteenth century allowed white southerners to rewrite history on their own terms by eliminating any traces of slavery from the

[604] "The Jefferson Davis Monument," *The Confederate Veteran* 7 (1899): 253.
[605] According to Gaines Foster, between 1865 and 1885, approximately 70 percent of monuments erected were in cemeteries. See Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 40-42.
[606] Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 140-41.
[607] Caroline Janney adds that memorial associations began to erect monuments in the public sphere by the late 1880s. See Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 140-41.
[608] Winberry, "'Lest We Forget'," 107-121. See also Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 64.

narrative. They singularly honored their accomplishments and sacrifices and ignored slavery as a cause of the war. Instead, these monuments focused on "honor, courage, duty, states' rights, and northern aggression."[609] The monuments symbolized southern devotion to the Confederate cause as well as reminders of the South's social order.

President-General of the UDC Rassie Hoskins White elaborated upon Price's sentiments: "I love the United Daughters of the Confederacy because they have demonstrated that Southern women may organize themselves into a nationwide body without losing womanly dignity, sweetness, or graciousness."[610] For many women in the UDC, they wished to avoid the public sphere. LeeAnn Whites maintains that this was out of their desire to maintain "mother love." This "mother love" simply perpetuated the wartime female gender roles of clothing, feeding, and tending to the wounded and the dead of the Confederacy. The memorialization of the men who fought and died in the Civil War is a perfect example of women honoring the husbands, fathers, and sons who had "done their 'duty' and 'sacrificed' their lives for the defense of southern women and children."[611] Ironically, however, their memorialization of the Confederate cause thrust them directly into the public sphere. Accordingly, they often asked former Confederate

[609] W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "'Woman's Hand and Heart and Deathless Love': White Women and the Commemorative Impulse in the New South," in Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson, *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscape of Southern Memory* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 66.

[610] Address of Mrs. Alexander White, *Minutes of the Twentieth Annual Convention*, 13.

[611] LeeAnn Whites, "'Stand By Your Man': The Ladies Memorial Association and the Reconstruction of Southern White Manhood," in LeeAnn Whites, ed., *Gender Matters: Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Making of the New South* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 88-89. Janney disagrees with this idea. She argues that that the women involved in these LMAs were not interested in "returning to antebellum gender patterns" and that they were "determined to control the direction of their associations, expand their civic virtues, and redefine the very nature of southern femininity." It appears that Southern women themselves contradicted their own agendas. The UDC and local LMAs seemed determined to redefine gender roles, yet they also exhibit traits that one would relate to the womanly duties of the antebellum home such as feeding, clothing, and caring for the family or in this case those that are considered to be part of the Confederate family. See Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 88.

leaders or members of male organizations like the United Confederate Veterans to speak at the unveilings of their monuments.[612]

Speakers frequently invoked the military accomplishments of Lee and Jackson. The spoken stories were often bolstered by a combination of themes including bravery, honor, and piety. More importantly, the public gatherings in which white southerners remembered their past and heroes perpetuated the myth of the Lost Cause. One apt way to describe these memorial exercises was that of an echo chamber. One dissenting southerner described the rampant erection of Confederate monuments as "a sort of sacred duty, a benevolent mania, a furious and unintelligible cult, and the Southerner himself a walking sarcophagus of dead ideas."[613] Stories were often repeated, if not embellished, and those presiding and in attendance only grew stronger in the conviction of the righteousness of their cause and the nobility of their heroes. In the pamphlet advertising an 1891 monument to Jefferson Davis, Sumner Archibald Cunningham reiterated that he one of the "noblest examples of unfaltering devotion to truth and principle…a sublime instance of an unmurmuring and heroic endurance of unmerited suffering."[614]

Archer Anderson, a prominent Lost Cause proponent and orator, frequently appeared at monument dedications to Confederate heroes. At a monument dedication in 1890, he contended that the only fitting complement to the George Washington statue was that of Robert E. Lee, once again reinforcing the perceived similarities between the founding father and Lee.[615] When the Jefferson Davis Monument Association sought donations to erect a monument in Nashville,

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[612] Whites, "'Stand By Your Man'," 91-92.
[613] "Trouble with the South," *The Appeal* (St. Paul, MN), October 8, 1921.
[614] Sumner Archibald Cunningham, "The Jefferson Davis Monument [Nashville, TN, 1891]," pamphlet, Virginia Historical Society.
[615] Archer Anderson, *Robert Edward Lee: An Address Delivered at the Dedication of the Monument to General Robert Edward Lee at Richmond, Virginia, May 29, 1890* (Richmond: Wm. Ellis Jones, Printer, 1890), 7. See also Col. John J. Garnett, *Biographical Sketch of General Robert Edward Lee* (New York: n.p., 1890) and "Official Souvenir of the Dedication of the Monument to General Robert E. Lee," (Richmond: R. Newton Moon & Co., Publishers, 1890). All from Virginia Historical Society.

Tennessee in 1891, the speaker highlighted his service in Mexico and for the South. One Confederate veteran in attendance interrupted the speech, claiming, "Mr. Speaker, I don't think you go far enough. Jefferson Davis suffered for us!" The Davis Monument Association used similar phrasing in their call for donations:

> There is one whom we would remember to-day. We cannot forget him who has left to his countrymen and to prosperity one of the noblest examples of unfaltering devotion to truth and principle…one who presented in his own person a sublime instance of an unmurmuring and heroic endurance of unmerited suffering.[616]

The 1912 ceremony dedicating the Jackson monument at the Virginia Military Institute began with a prayer, and the orations mostly talked about his military accomplishments and piety.[617] Orators talked about his military accomplishments at greater lengths than Lee's simply because Jackson was unable to contribute to the rebuilding of the postwar South. Furthermore, these speeches often included rhetoric that defended secession and attempted to absolve themselves of their treasonous actions.[618]

Confederate monuments and cemeteries were effective in perpetuating the memories of the Confederacy and Confederate heroes alive. But perhaps the most prevalent forms of memorialization were the public holidays enacted by the state governments of the South. Whereas monuments and other physical shrines had to be visited to be observed, state holidays were a far-reaching method of memorialization. The closure of state agencies and certain public

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[616] Cunningham, "The Jefferson Davis Monument [Nashville, TN, 1891]," pamphlet, VHS.

[617] *Memorial Exercises at the Unveiling of Sir Moses Ezekiel's Statue of Stonewall Jackson, Virginia Military Institute, June 19, 1912* (Lexington, VA: Rockbridge County News Print, 1912), 3-74. White southerners loved to compare their generals to prominent ones of the past. In this instance, Jackson was "greater than Casear…Bonaparte…Marlbrough…Wellington…" (69). As for his piety, he was "a Christian without fanaticism, a Christian in the open; one who did not hesitate in the presence of assembled thousands to pause on the eve of some great enterprise and raise his hand aloft, invoking the blessing of devine [*sic*] Providence upon his efforts and those of his soldiers."

[618] See Charles Francis Adams, *Lee's Centennial: An Address* (Chicago: Americana House Publishers, 1948), 5-76. He states, "…I maintain that every man in the eleven States seceding from the Union had in 1861, whether he would or no, to decide for himself whether to adhere to his State or to the Nation; and I finally assert that, whichever way he decided, if only he decided honestly, putting self-interest behind him, he decided right." (15)

schools practically forced citizens of the southern states to remember the Confederacy and its ideologies. Then again, most, if not all, white southerners did not have to be convinced to remember their heroes.

Georgia was the first state to officially establish a state holiday dedicated to a dead Confederate officer – Robert E. Lee.[619] His birthday, January 19, was chosen as the date. It is somewhat surprising that Virginia was not the first state to establish what was originally known as Robert E. Lee Day, but this demonstrated that he was immensely popular throughout the entirety of the South, not only his native state. The Southern Society of New York, a northern organization made up of southerners, regularly held celebrations of Lee's birthday where they reaffirmed his loyalty to his state and the United States and his honor as a soldier. An address in 1906 reproduced and advocated for the argument made by Boston-born Charles Francis Adams that "if Robert E. Lee was a traitor, so also and indisputably was George Washington."[620] Although the Confederacy and the South had plenty of allies in New York for decades, this address and Adams' arguments demonstrated a willingness to accept Lee as an American once again.

Some Virginians believed that they were not the first state to adopt the holiday because they were shackled by the widespread desire to "avoid anything like antagonism" from the North. Even in the face of growing opposition to their memorial exercises by African Americans and northern groups like the Grand Army of the Republic, perhaps Virginians felt the need to increase their veneration by creating state holidays, like Robert E. Lee Day.[621] These state

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[619] "Lee's Birthday," *The Macon Telegraph*, August 10, 1889.
[620] John A. Wyeth, *Gen. Robert E. Lee. Commemorative Address Before the New York Southern Society on the Anniversary of the Great Commander's Birth, January 19th, 1906* (New York: Unz and Co., 1906), 11.
[621] See "Robert E. Lee's Birthday," *The Norfolk Virginian*, August 16, 1889; *Staunton Spectator* (Staunton, VA), August 28, 1889, for example. *The Norfolk Virginian* argued that the celebrations of Lee's birthday should be observed with "appropriate ceremonies indicative of the affection and devotion of the people of the Southland…[that] will not be limited to the confines of the South…" January 19, 1892.

holidays arguably spread pro-Confederate ideals further because state offices and some businesses and schools closed in the South to honor Lee and other leaders. While one had to visit a statue to feel its emotional output, state holidays that affected many walks of life were felt much more broadly. Within several years, the southern states readily adopted Robert E. Lee Day as a state holiday, and each celebration featured parades, flowers, decorations, and speeches by former Confederates about his character, piety, and his importance to the South.

Jefferson Davis Day soon followed Robert E. Lee Day, although the initial date is speculative. The earliest observed instance of commemorating the president's birthday occurred in Texas in 1890, but a consistent celebration throughout the South did not appear until at least 1892.[622] A committee of the United Confederate Veterans appealed to the citizens of Texas for donations to the Davis Land company and the benefit of Varina Howell Davis after Jefferson died in 1889. At an 1890 banquet for the Louisiana Division of the Association of Veterans of the Army of Northern Virginia, President Colonel David Zable hoped for "the time when Jefferson Davis' birthday shall be observed as a legal holiday in every southern state."[623] On February 24, 1892, James K. Vardaman, the virulent white supremacist, introduced legislation in Jackson, Mississippi that made June 3 a legal holiday observing Jefferson Davis's birthday. It passed with only two dissenting votes.[624] In the proposal, Vardaman wrote that he deserved the holiday due to his "heroism" in the face of "taunts, jeers and criticism," as well as his suffering for the "people he loved, and the cause he believed to be right."[625]

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[622] See "Jefferson Davis," *Austin Weekly Statesman*, May 22, 1890.
[623] See "Veterans' Banquet," *The Times-Picayune* (New Orleans, LA), January 22, 1892.
[624] See "Jeff. Davis' Birthday," *Logansport Pharos-Tribune* (Logansport, IN), February 24, 1892, and "Jefferson Davis' Birthday," *Daily Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock, AR), February 25, 1892. For more information on the first observance of Jefferson Davis's birthday, see *Durham Globe* (Durham, NC), June 4, 1892; *The Weekly Democrat* (Natchez, MS), May 18, 1892.
[625] "Jeff. Davis' Birthday," *St. Louis-Post Dispatch*, February 23, 1892.

The UCV committee felt it was fitting to hold a donation drive for the Davis estate on Jefferson's birthday. The observation date varied by state, but it was generally at the end of May or the beginning of June.[626] In Mississippi, for example, it was celebrated alongside Memorial Day on the last Monday of May. Alabama celebrated the holiday on the first Monday in June, and Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Tennessee observed the holiday on June 3, Davis's actual birthday.[627] The celebrations for Jefferson Davis Day were akin to Robert E. Lee Day, and later Lee-Jackson Day: decorations, parades, and speeches by ex-Confederates preaching Lost Cause rhetoric.

The first observance of Lee-Jackson Day was held in Richmond on January 19, 1904.[628] The Virginia House of Delegates proposed to add Jackson to Lee's birthday because his holiday was already in place, and nobody in the legislature at the time was certain of his birthday (Jackson speculated that it was the 23rd, but it is now known to be January 21).[629] Although Lee was the most prominent southerner in most peoples' minds, Jackson served a valuable place in Confederate memorial exercises. Former Confederate Captain and member of the Stonewall Brigade Thomas D. Ransom proposed the addition of Jackson's birthday to the celebration of Lee's. He contended that the two men "were so united in life" that it was necessary to celebrate their birthdays together.[630] The celebrations for Lee-Jackson Day were consistently grandiose. The 1904 celebration in Richmond was described as "quiet," as state offices and institutions,

[626] I use "was" for the sake of tense continuity, but Jefferson Davis Day is still celebrated in parts of the South, notably Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, but they are typically not "official" state celebrations and are often organized by Confederate associations. However, the growing opposition to public memorialization of the Confederacy has led to many states eliminating the holiday.
[627] See The Florida Legislature, "2010 Florida Statutes (Including Special Session A)"; Kentucky Legislative Research Commission, "2.110 Public Holidays"; Louisiana State Legislature, "Days of public rest, legal holidays, and half-holidays"; United States Department of Veteran Affairs, "Memorial Day History"; Alabama State Government, "Official State of Alabama Calendar."
[628] "Honor to Dead Heroes," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), January 19, 1904. In the same speech in which he advocated for a holiday in honor of Jefferson Davis's birthday, Colonel Zable also argued that the date of their banquet, January 22, was a commemoration of Stonewall Jackson's birthday.
[629] "The Virginia Legislature," *The Norfolk Landmark*, January 20, 1904.
[630] "Jackson's Birthday," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), November 20, 1903.

banks, and public schools closed. Several veterans received decorations, and that Sunday a parade was held whereupon two wreaths were laid at the Lee and Jackson monuments.[631] "Quiet" may have been a relative term when juxtaposed against the celebration held in Danville, Virginia. The Danville Light Infantry, cadets from the Danville Military Institute, and more than a hundred Confederate veterans marched on the city's streets, and the air was filled with old war songs led by the Academy of Music.[632]

One of the more curious aspects about Robert E. Lee Day, later Lee-Jackson Day, was the level of celebration when compared to that of George Washington's birthday on February 22.[633] White southerners spent several decades arguing that Lee was essentially a second George Washington in terms of being a "founding father." In Lee's case, he attempted to secure autonomy for the Confederacy. However, the major difference was that Lee failed to achieve victory. *The Norfolk Virginian* reasoned that Lee's birthday should be celebrated alongside Washington's because he was "second only to [Washington] in the hearts and minds of the people…"[634] However, they contradicted themselves by using Washington as the ultimate comparison for Lee. On the other hand, they rarely, if ever, celebrated his birthday with the same enthusiasm as Lee, despite proclaiming Washington to be the ideal American. Alexandria, Virginia, Washington's hometown, was one of the few places that held regular celebrations, but even then, there were years in which a parade in Washington's honor did not occur.[635] In

[631] "Honor to Dead Heroes," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), January 19, 1904.
[632] "Honor of Lee: Birthday of Distinguished General Fittingly Celebrated," *The Semi-Weekly Messenger* (Wilmington, NC), January 22, 1904. Curiously, resolutions commending Generals John. B Gordon and James Longstreet were adopted in Danville. It seems as though Confederate memorialization reached the point of unity, and southerners no longer felt the need to slander Longstreet as a Lee critic and a scalawag.
[633] Now known as President's Day.
[634] "Lee's Birthday," *The Norfolk Virginian*, January 19, 1892.
[635] See "Soon to Decide on Celebration," *Alexandria Gazette*, January 23, 1920 for information about missing parades. In 1915, the *Nashville Banner* reported that "George Washington's birthday was by no means neglected at the college. Monday afternoon the seniors gave a delightful party with features appropriate for the occasion." Although the article states the opposite, it is quite clear that Washington's birthday was an afterthought, especially

contrast, white southerners seemingly held a parade or some lavish celebration for Lee, Jackson, and Davis every year beginning in 1889. Their collective celebrations indicated the political realities of the times. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their memories helped advance a white supremacist agenda. Though celebrations of Washington were more limited than that of the three Confederate leaders, Washington's memory served a new purpose: he was used as a comparison for the three men at various times to make them seem more "American" and patriotic. This façade that covered up their treasonous actions.

There also seemed to be a hierarchy in the celebrations of these Confederate leaders. While all the celebrations throughout the first few decades of the twentieth century featured lavish decorations, parades, and large crowds, the ceremonies honored each man somewhat differently. The celebrations of Davis's birthday rarely spoke of any other Confederate leader. The annual celebrations featured glorification of the Confederacy of which he was the singular representation. Magnolias, the state flower of Mississippi, were often the foundations for decorations.[636] Prayers, speeches, and songs typified the celebrations, and the piety of each man was almost always mentioned, reinforcing the religiosity of the Confederate cause.[637]

Despite the name, Lee's memory dominated the celebrations on Lee-Jackson Day. The addition of Jackson to the celebration was a logical idea considering his birthday was just two days after Lee's and did not warrant another holiday. But white southerners seemingly revered him more than Jackson in the overall scope of Confederate memory. Many newspaper articles only referred to Lee in their headlines despite the name of the holiday, although this was more

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since Lee's birthday was centered on the front page earlier that year, calling him "one of the South's greatest men." See "Birthday of Robert E. Lee," *Nashville Banner*, January 19, 1915 and February 27, 1915.

[636] "Appropriately Observed," *The Birmingham News* (Birmingham, AL), June 4, 1904; "Jefferson Davis' Birthday Fittingly Celebrated," *The Gastonia Gazette* (Gastonia, NC), June 4, 1920.

[637] See "Faith of Gen. R. E. Lee," in "January 19th Lee-Jackson Day," *The Charlotte News*, January 18, 1914. There is also a short section dedicated to Davis's faith, but ironically no mention of Jackson whose faith bordered on fanaticism.

common in the late 1910s and beyond.[638] The first ten years saw a relatively balanced celebration of both generals. But the ensuing celebrations put Lee at the center, which is unsurprising given the abundance of love for him among white southerners. He also lived to fight until the end of the war, seemingly suffering more than Jackson who died at the height of Confederate fortunes.

African Americans scorned public and state-sanctioned celebrations of Confederate figures. The celebration of Confederate figures by private organizations was one thing. It was completely different when states publicly celebrated those same figures. "Robert E. Lee…was a rebel and a traitor," *The New York Age* proclaimed, "he was a slave-holder…[which] will always detract from his reputation as a man and soldier."[639] Noted African American scholar and activist W. E. B. Du Bois also spoke out against a day celebrating Lee because of his ties to slavery and the Confederacy's cornerstone. He also contradicted his own piety by fighting to keep other humans in bondage, as Du Bois wrote, "Robert E. Lee was a traitor and a rebel – not indeed to his country, but to humanity and humanity's God."[640] To many African Americans, the celebration of Lee, and others like him, was akin to praising treason against the United States. Furthermore, the fact that states sanctioned these celebrations seemed of a piece with the systematic attack on black southerners' rights and liberties in the turn of the century era.

This memorialization of the Confederacy and its leaders also troubled African Americans. The continued reverence of the Confederacy insulted the patriotic actions that led to black freedom and threatened to undermine their newfound rights. There was an obvious divide amongst white southerners and African Americans on how to remember Jackson, Lee, and

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[638] See "Lee-Jackson Day Observed," *Vicksburg Evening Post*, January 19, 1906; "January 19th Lee-Jackson Day," *The Charlotte News*, January 18, 1914; "South Celebrates Lee's Birthday in Fitting Ceremony," *The Charlotte News*, January 19, 1917; "Tribute Paid By the South to Lee," *The Decatur Daily* (Decatur, AL), January 19, 1931. Notice the changes in the headlines in the latter two articles. Lee is at the center of attention, and Jackson is merely an afterthought in the articles themselves.

[639] "Robert E. Lee," *The New York Age*, January 24, 1907.

[640] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Robert E. Lee," *Crisis*, vol. 35 (March 1928), 97.

Davis. By remembering them as leaders of a legitimate, legal cause, and characterizing them as American patriots, Lost Cause leaders separated the men's memories from slavery and the rights of African Americans. By perpetuating the southern view of the Civil War, African American agency and the horrors of slavery were expunged from the record.

Notable African Americans such as Frederick Douglass and Du Bois used their widespread influence to criticize the veneration of Confederate heroes, notably Lee and Davis, as well as condemn the widespread erection of Confederate statues across the United States.[641] The veneration of Lee troubled Douglass. Upon his death, Douglass remarked, "we can scarcely take up a newspaper…that is not filled with *nauseating* flatteries of the late Robert E. Lee."[642] African Americans grappled with the dangers that Confederate veneration posed to their newly found liberty.

The plaques that adorned Confederate monuments in the South often referred to the soldiers and leaders of the Confederacy. Importantly, they represented the altered narrative of the Civil War – praising the supposed bravery, patriotism, and honor of Confederate soldiers.[643] They did so without any mention of slavery, the primary cause of the Civil War. The Confederate monument that once stood in front of Tampa, Florida's courthouse bore the following inscription:

> Not theirs the rush of maddened wrath
> That, reckless, sundered ties of blood,
> But Honor's beacon showed the path
> Where dauntless duty stood.
> Through famine years they followed far
> Where her unswerving banners led –

[641] See W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Perfect Vacation," *Crisis*, vol. 38 (August 1931), 279. Douglass argued that Lee's death should mark the end of his "bombastic laudation." In David W. Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War: Keeping Faith in Jubilee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 229.
[642] Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 229.
[643] On the other side it read, "To the honor and courage of the patriots of the Confederate States of America." The monument was one of many that were removed from their original placements beginning in 2017. Firsthand notes taken by the author in June-July, 2017.

Beyond her, Glory's fame-tipped star;
Behind her, Honor's dead.
The years their slow procession keep,
The banner barred with red is furled,
But now its gray-clad soldiers sleep –
The heroes of the world.[644]

This white-washed version of history was prominent in the United States throughout the end of the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century. African Americans, however, took note and criticized this practice. In a tour of the South in 1931, W.E.B. Du Bois commented on the lies imprinted on the bases of these monuments. Instead of perpetuating fictional tales of bravery and heroism, the plaques should read: "Sacred to the memory of those who fought to Perpetuate Human Slavery."[645]

When the erection of monuments began in earnest in the 1880s and 1890s, black Americans verbally battled against the glorification of the Confederacy and the Lost Cause.[646] In their minds, Confederate monuments reinvigorated the white supremacist ideal of the Confederacy. It threatened to strengthen the grip of Jim Crow on the South. When the United Daughters of the Confederacy attempted to erect a monument to Jefferson Davis in Louisville, Kentucky in 1921, northern African American newspapers disapproved. The Minnesota *Appeal* challenged that instead of erecting monuments to the Confederacy, the United Daughters of the Confederacy should have put the money they raised to better use – aiding veterans that fought to preserve the Union and eliminate the institution of slavery. In doing so, the *Appeal* invoked the older belief that Jefferson Davis was the personification of the Confederacy but used it to benefit their agenda. As the "ardent advocate of the Confederacy whose capstone was slavery," the

[644] Inscription copied by the author, June-July, 2017. Better-formatted version found in James Keegan O'Connor, "James K. O'Connor, His Voice and Pen," (New York: Davis's Union Printery, 1913), 144-45.
[645] Du Bois, "The Perfect Vacation," 279. Du Bois also noted the irony that one monument in North Carolina read: "Died Fighting for Liberty!"
[646] See "The Moving of the Lee Statue," *Richmond Planet*, May 10, 1890.

Appeal contended, he "typifie[d] a doctrine which cost our country a million lives and a billion in gold."[647] To the *Appeal*, and surely other black newspapers, there was another perspective of the war that the South was neglecting to acknowledge.

Black voices noted the hypocrisy of honoring men like Lee on a national level given their status as rebels. In 1900, the Hall of Fame for Great Americans opened at what was then the University Heights campus of New York University, both Jackson and Lee were enshrined. Similarly, the National Statuary Hall is a chamber located within the U.S. Capitol building featuring sculptures of notable Americans. First proposed in 1864, each state could contribute up to two statues of prominent people from their respective states.[648] Davis and Lee are both represented in National Statuary Hall. These monuments, particularly in the Capitol, irked African Americans. "Virginia could not honor Thomas Jefferson, who…helped to found a government which Lee tried to destroy," fumed *The Broad Ax*.[649] Lee's statue in National Statuary Hall appeared in 1909. George Washington was Virginia's other representative, and his sculpture did not appear until 1934. It was abundantly clear that partisan, Confederate memory dominated the minds of the white South in the early 1900s. When his image appeared on a postage stamp, African Americans quickly denounced the action. Once again undertaking a patriotic tone, they questioned why Lee, someone who tried to destroy the Union, received a stamp and not those who saved it.[650]

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[647] "A Shaft of Jeff Davis," *The Appeal* (St. Paul, MN), October 8, 1921. Reprinted November 25, 1921.
[648] "National Statuary Hall," *Capitol Complex*, https://www.aoc.gov/capitol-buildings/national-statuary-hall.
[649] "Reviving Old Issues," *The Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), August 21, 1909.
[650] "Rogers Denounces 'The Robert E. Lee' Postage Stamp: Says U.S. Idealizing The Greatest Of All 'Slavery Champions'," *The Pittsburgh Courier*, April 17, 1937.

Figure 5: Robert E. Lee statue in Statuary Hall, ca. 1920-1950[651]

Some considered the erection ceremonies to be of concern rather than the monuments themselves. Having earned their legal freedom with the Union's victory, many African Americans felt a strong loyalty to the United States, particularly to the North and the actions of the Union soldiers, some of them black, that won them their freedom.[652] Thus, the prominence of the Confederate flag during monument ceremonies chagrinned many in the African American community, especially those who served in the Union armies. The program for the 1890 Lee monument dedication featured an ode to the battle flag.[653] The prominence of the Confederate flag and the absence of the United States flag at the dedication of a Confederate memorial in

[651] Photograph by Theodor Horydczak, Horydczak Collection, Library of Congress, 1920-1950. This image is public domain.
[652] See, for example, "War Time Heroes" and "A Forgotten Hero," *The Appeal* (St. Paul, MN), September 12, 1891. Articles such as these highlighted stories from the Civil War that always exemplified the bravery and patriotism of Union soldiers, regardless of age. To African Americans, stories about white soldiers of the Union were just as important as black soldiers given their ultimate victory in the war and securing emancipation.
[653] "Address to the Confederate Battle Flag," in *Memorial of the Unveiling of Lee's Statue, Richmond, Virginia, May 29th,1890* (Richmond: W. Ellis Jones, Book and Job Printer, 1890), 6.

New York City was decried as unpatriotic.[654] Similarly, when white southerners dedicated the Lee monument in Richmond in 1890, the African American *Richmond Planet* was outwardly offended. Although he had "many virtues worthy of emulation," the *Planet* called out to the nation that its display was intolerable "in the name of every patriotic impulse" they had as American citizens.[655] When Henry McNeal Turner, the prominent African American Bishop received harsh criticism for allegedly disrespecting the American flag in 1906, the *Richmond Planet* scoffed. If men like Davis, Lee, and Jackson are lauded in the country and then-President Roosevelt was so averse to improving the condition of African Americans, then Turner, "this accomplished leader of the colored race," should not be unfairly criticized.[656] In these instances, African Americans denounced the veneration of the Confederacy and its leaders as unpatriotic and a betrayal of the nation they had fought to reunify.

The 1889 dedication of a bronze statue of Confederate soldiers in Alexandria, Virginia served as an apt manifestation of the fears African Americans had about Confederate memorialization. General Cyrus Bussey spoke on their behalf, castigating the memorial exercises as "fires of secession" which effectively spat in the face of those who served in the Union armies. African Americans lauded Bussey's oration, arguing that he deserved thanks from all Americans for the denunciation of the misleading idea that "the rebels who fought to disrupt this Union…are heroes and that their cause was a just and righteous one."[657]

The majority of black voices outright criticizing the erection of Confederate monuments tended to be in the North. Others in the South simply reported the facts of the monument

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[654] *Richmond Planet*, June 7, 1890.
[655] "The Voice of the Colored Press," *Richmond Planet*, July 21, 1890.
[656] "Bishop Turner and His Utterances," *Richmond Planet*, March 3, 1906. Turner was a controversial figure beginning in the 1890s. A Union veteran and respected African Methodist Episcopal bishop, he eventually gave up faith in black equality in the US in the 1890s and led a back-to-Africa movement. See Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 149, for more.
[657] "Gen. Bussey's Sensational Speech," *The Washington Bee*, June 8, 1889.

unveilings, such as who presided, who spoke, and how many people were in attendance.[658] African Americans' precarious position in the postwar South and the rise of Jim Crow persecution likely limited the lengths to which they willingly criticized their oppressors. Northern African Americans faced virtually no reprisals for their condemnation of Confederate memorialization. On the other hand, southern African Americans lived in constant fear of the consequences of Jim Crow. Given that white supremacy comprised the foundations of both the Confederacy and Jim Crow, criticism of the Confederacy by African Americans would likely have carried the same consequences that came with resistance to Jim Crow laws and regulations. The omission of details regarding the dedications of Confederate statues was a silent form of protest against what the Confederacy stood for: white supremacy. By not talking about the monument ceremonies, black newspapers may have seen this as a means of silencing the racist white South. Some in the South wrote letters and editorials to northern African American newspapers as a way of venting their frustrations, but oftentimes their voices went unheard out of fear.[659]

There are exceptions to every rule, and some African Americans respected and even appreciated some former leaders of the Confederacy. Sam Davis, and enslaved servant to Jefferson Davis, attended to the president during the Civil War. When the Confederacy collapsed, Jefferson gave him $500 in gold and told him to go north and find a new life as a free man. Sam eventually opened a mining company in Idaho and became a "prospective millionaire."[660] Sam allegedly had fond memories of his master and christened a new mine of his "The Miss Winnie Davis." But Sam's experiences alone do not negate the broad memory of

[658] See, for example, *Arkansas Weekly Mansion*, March 1, 1884; "General Southern News, *Richmond Planet*, September 25, 1897.
[659] See "An Old Soldier Resents Southern Airs of Pride," *The Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), June 26, 1909; "Trouble with the South," *The Appeal* (St. Paul, MN), October 8, 1921.
[660] "Ex-Slave Now Rich," *The Washington Bee*, July 13, 1907.

Davis as a perpetuator of slavery. White southern newspapers used the story of Sam to demonstrate that the South was benevolent to African Americans. The original article described Sam as "faithful" to the president, and it drew a link between the $500 he was given to his million-dollar fortune that portrayed Davis as the stereotypical benevolent master.[661] But what they really presented was the story of a token enslaved person in the hope that it would stave off criticism of white supremacy. The story was reprinted in *The Washington Bee*, an African American newspaper, as a story of hope for blacks suffering under the oppression of Jim Crow. Sam, the former enslaved servant to Jefferson Davis, had made his fortune out West, so not all hope was lost. Ultimately, white southern will to perpetuate the Lost Cause overcame the pushback by African Americans, as Jackson, Lee, and Davis continued to be enshrined nationally while Jim Crow persisted in the South.

Undying Symbols of the Lost Cause

Although there was a concerted effort by white southerners to alter the narrative and memory of the Civil War as early as the 1870s, a more cohesive campaign began in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Uncertainty about perpetuating the memories of that painful war divided the white South in the late 1860s and early 1870s. Many believed that continuing to remember the war hindered reunification in the United States. As such, a unified and intensive movement of Lost Cause rhetoric did not progress nearly as rapidly during the 1870s as it did in the 1880s and the 1890s. Books, articles, and other print culture spread throughout the United States in a concerted effort to perpetuate the memories that appealed to and benefited them. While each man's post-1890 memory needs to be understood, it is vital to also understand how their

[661] "A Millionaire, Was a Slave of President Jefferson Davis," *The Vicksburg Herald*, June 5, 1907.

memories were intertwined to further the advancement of Lost Cause rhetoric and ideals in the 1890s and early twentieth century.

Jackson was not the subject of nearly as many books as Davis and Lee, and so their presence was much stronger in the post-1890 era. Although he was remembered as being a brilliant military officer and a pious southerner, his memory largely became an extension of Lee's, who embodied similar traits. One of his greatest supporters was his widow, Mary Anna Jackson. Known as the "Widow of the Confederacy" for the approximately 50 years after his death, she authored two memoirs about her husband and frequently attended reunions and other Confederate ceremonies. Her two books, *Life and Letters of General Thomas J. Jackson* (1891) and *Memoirs of Stonewall Jackson* (1895) helped flesh out the character of Jackson beyond the typical stories his former soldiers and students recounted. In the former, she created controversy because she tended to borrow material from other published works to fill in some of the gaps. Notably, she used material from R. L. Dabney's *Life and Campaigns of Lieutenant-General Thomas J. Jackson* (1866) as well as Margaret Junkin Preston's article about Stonewall from *Century* magazine published five years prior.[662] Preston was furious at Jackson's actions and demanded restitution because she knew the South would buy Jackson's book in large quantities. She eventually wrote a forward acknowledging Preston's work, but that was largely the extent of it.[663]

To combat criticisms of her husband, Mary Anna often injected her own speculations into the narrative. When the soldiers were suffering from frigid temperatures and food shortages in

[662] Margaret Preston Junkin was the sister of Jackson's first wife, Elinor (Ellie), who died in childbirth soon after their marriage in 1853. For more explanation of their relationship and marriage, see James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson* (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1997), 144-49 and S. C. Gwynne, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2014), 144-46.
[663] See Sarah E. Gardner, "'A Sweet Solace to My Lonely Heart': 'Stonewall' Jackson and Mary Anna Jackson and the Civil War," in Carol K. Bleser and Lesley J. Gordon, ed., *Intimate Strategies of the Civil War: Military Commanders and Their Wives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 63-65.

the winter of 1861-1862, Mary Anna wrote that Jackson shared "all these hardships and privations…with the troops, and tried to encourage them in patient endurance, and inspire them to press on." In reality, he pushed his men to march hard through the freezing cold and did not realize their discontent until after they began to openly complain about him days later. However, she attempted to shift blame onto others and dispel the soldiers' criticism of Jackson.[664]

Mary Anna also made sure to include high praise for her husband from others whenever possible. In one instance, she wrote that she was in Winchester, Virginia, in 1862, and she overheard two people talking about her husband. One last asked, "And what do you think of *Old Stonewall?*" A Confederate officer replied, "I have *the most implicit confidence in him*, madam…I *know* the man, and have witnessed his ability and patriotic devotion, *I would follow him anywhere*."[665] According to one anecdote, his soldiers declared that Stonewall was far greater than Moses because Moses "took forty years to lead the Israelites through the wilderness, with manna to feed them one; 'old Jack' would have double-quicked through it on half rations in three days."[666] Historian Sarah E. Gardner concludes that Mary Anna used this biography as a chance to redefine the terms of the Civil War along the lines of good and evil and to give herself a more prominent role in his history. She typically underscored Jackson's piety and discussed the holiness and divinity of the Confederate cause while implying that the Union was inherently evil.[667] By using much of the information from Margaret Preston Junkin, Mary Anna essentially seized back control of her husband's memory and rewrote it on her own terms. As such, Mary

[664] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters of General Thomas J. Jackson (Stonewall Jackson)* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1891), 223-24.
[665] Jackson, *Life and Letters*, 241.
[666] Ibid., 285.
[667] See Sarah E. Gardner, *Blood & Irony: Southern White Women's Narratives of the Civil War, 1861-1937* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 96-100.

Anna perpetuated myths about her husband's piety, his bravery, and the righteousness of the Confederate cause.

Twenty years later, Mary Anna Jackson embroiled herself in another literary dispute, this time regarding her husband's portrayal, and it took place in the public sphere. Mary Johnston's 1911 book *The Long Roll* was a best-seller about the Confederacy, featuring Stonewall Jackson as a main character. Johnston was a popular author in the South, but her portrayal of the general did not sit well with his widow. She repeatedly mentioned his supposed hypochondria and his penchant for sucking on lemons. Johnston included instances of soldiers calling Jackson "Fool Tom," among other early criticisms of his leadership.[668] Her book was also heavy with themes of the horror and brutality of war, sometimes exemplified through his actions.[669]

During her narrative of the Seven Days' Battle, a subordinate officer named Cleave, one of the main characters of the book, tried to persuade Jackson to attack the Union position on a Sunday in order to preserve the military integrity of the army. He adamantly refused and dismissed Cleave, stating "So little the fighter knows! See, what war does! But I will keep, in part at least, the Sabbath." The officer protested and Jackson threatened to take his sword from him.[670] There is undoubtedly some hyperbole in these interpretations. Although he was a stern disciplinarian, the language in Johnston's book suggests an exaggeration of narrative. To be fair, she does state in her foreword that the book is a combination of historical fact and fiction. However, the eccentric and fanatical depiction of Jackson threatened to harm his reputation in

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[668] Johnston, *The Long Roll* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1911), 141-42; G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (1898; repr. New York: Da Capo Press, 1988), 149.
[669] When several men were executed for desertion in the summer of 1862, Johnston characterized Jackson as metaphorically pulling the trigger without any restraint. Some of the men had given somewhat rational reasons for leaving such as wishing to check on their family at their nearby farms. The others were simply sick of the war, but Jackson threw the six in irons, and it was believed that they were executed after the court martial. (234-35). See also Wallace Hettle, "Mary Johnston and 'Stonewall' Jackson: A Virginia Feminist and the Politics of Historical Fiction," *Journal of Historical Biography*, vol. 3 (Spring 2008): 41.
[670] Johnston, *The Long Roll*, 473.

the eyes of the white South due to the book's popularity. This is the reason Mary Anna Jackson took offense. Despite her protests, some soldiers who served under Jackson applauded Johnston's book and described its historical accuracy. A soldier's wife who served in the United Daughters of the Confederacy assured Johnston that "[Jackson] appreciates your book."[671]

Although Johnston demonstrated how Stonewall's exploits earned him higher esteem from his men throughout the war, Mary Anna Jackson took offense at her characterization of her husband. She was furious, as she had spent the last several decades caring for the memory of her late husband. Though she normally avoided public controversy, felt compelled to act, believing that "fiction is more read by the young than history."[672] Mary Anna Jackson wrote her own review of *The Long Roll*, reprimanding Johnston for her unjust portrayal. She also called upon former Confederate soldiers from Jackson's units to defend him publicly.[673] Unsurprisingly, Jackson's former comrades quickly put pen to paper to defend their hero.[674] The portrayal of him was so unbecoming of his memory, his former staff officer, James Power Smith, wrote that it would be "an unmeasured loss to generations to come if a picture so marred be retained in the thought and memory of our people."[675] Despite Mary Anna's denunciation of *The Long Roll*, some of the information Johnston included was historically accurate, such as the "Fool Tom" moniker and his penchant for pushing his men to the brink of exhaustion to achieve victory. However, Mary Anna believed that her husband's image should have been immaculate with all

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[671] See John H. Leathers to Mary Johnston, July 8, 1911; Forrest Littlejohn to MJ, September 29, 1911; Quotation from Mrs. Jason Britton Gant to MJ, June 29, 1911. All letters found in Mary Johnston Papers, University of Virginia Special Collections.
[672] Jackson quoted in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, October 29, 1911.
[673] Gardner, *Blood & Irony*, 65-68. See also Hettle, "Mary Johnston and 'Stonewall' Jackson," 31-55.
[674] See, for example, Captain James Power Smith, "Stonewall Jackson: His Character," *Confederate Veteran,* vol. 19 (1911): 496-498. As a former staff officer of Jackson's, Smith took great offense to his portrayal in *The Long Roll*. Most notably, he argued against Johnston's description of Jackson as an "unhappy Presbyterian," instead writing that he was "a Christian believer of a very direct and simple character…He was devout and reverent, humble, steadfast, prayerful in spirit and faithful in duty." (497)
[675] Smith, 498.

muddy aspects scrubbed clean, so she fought against any sort of criticism of him regardless of its historical accuracy.

During the Civil War, African American newspapers were mostly indifferent to the exploits of Jackson.[676] They knew he was a talented general, and many of their articles simply relayed his deeds to their readers. On occasion, however, these writers rationalized that the popularity of a general fighting to keep enslaved persons in bondage created a negative stigma. The Philadelphia-based *Christian Recorder* quipped, "the prayers of Stonewall Jackson are as refreshing to Beelzebub, as a draught of ice-water would be to the importunate and unfortunate Dives…"[677] His presence was also likened to the "fifth plague" of the Bible, and his capture of thousands of prisoners signaled the embodiment of "smite."[678]

In the two decades after the war ended, their unhappiness with Jackson's veneration continued. They questioned the oft-repeated notion that he was an ardent American patriot. Although he graduated from West Point, wore the United States uniform, swore an oath to defend his country, a New Orleans paper noted that "he proved faithless…at the very first test to which loyalty was put." Furthermore, when he switched his allegiance to the Confederacy, he illustrated "the dangerous nature of the States-rights dogma, which is just now being revived all over the South."[679] Indeed, African Americans saw the growing movement towards Confederate memorialization as one of many pillars upon which the Lost Cause and Jim Crow were built. Jackson's place in African American memory is mostly absent in a national sense. Since he died during the war and did not play a part in Reconstruction or the redemption of the South, African Americans largely forgot about him unless referenced alongside a fellow former Confederate.

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[676] See *Christian Recorder* – July 12, 1862; July 19, 1862; August 2, 1862; August 16, 1862; November 29, 1862; January 10, 1863; January 17, 1863; March 14, 1863; May 23, 1863.
[677] "The Law of Agitation," *The Christian Recorder*, January 10, 1863.
[678] "The Plagues of This Country," *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia), July 12, 1862.
[679] "A Few Questions," *The Weekly Louisianian* (New Orleans), December 4, 1875.

Jackson's place in African American memory is mostly absent in a national sense. Since he died during the war and did not play a part in Reconstruction or the redemption of the South, African Americans largely forgot about him unless referenced alongside a fellow former Confederate. Compared to Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis, his post-1890 memory was not talked about much by African Americans. Compared to Lee and Davis, Jackson was less important in the overall scope of the Lost Cause. They sometimes treated him as a simple soldier while minimizing his involvement with perpetuating slavery, instead publishing reminiscences from his former soldiers or other generic stories.[680] One article told the story of how the house at Guinea Station, Virginia, where Jackson died, was owned by an African American. The Stonewall Jackson Memorial Association offered the man $5,000 for the property, and the newspaper likely reveled in a Confederate society offering to pay an African American a substantial amount of money even if it meant the preservation of Confederate memory.[681]

Jackson did earn some respect from a small community of African Americans due to his piety. He believed in bringing everyone around him into the grace of God, including the enslaved and freedpeople. The black communities in Lexington and Roanoke, Virginia, remembered him as a man of faith rather than an officer of the Confederacy. As early as the 1840s, Jackson made

[680] "Keenan's Charge," *Richmond Planet*, August 4, 1900; "Held Him in High Esteem," *Richmond Planet*, July 2, 1904; "Barbara Frietchie," *The Dallas Express*, January 31, 1920. A 1905 *Richmond Planet* article referred to Jackson as a "brave fighter." See "Stonewall Jackson's Plan," *Richmond Planet*, March 18, 1905. One article also relayed a light-hearted story about how Jackson's word was law in the Confederate army. When Jackson spotted a soldier from Hood's Texans climbing a fence to forage from a cherry tree, he peppered the soldier with questions about where he was going, what command he belonged to, and what state he was from. The soldier replied that he did not know to each question Jackson asked. Jackson let the man go, but he asked a comrade what that was all about. The comrade replied that "Old Stonewall and General Hood gave orders yesterday that we were not to know anything until after the next fight." Light-hearted as it was, it implied Jackson's benevolence, as he let the soldier forage after his questioning, and it also reinforced the idea that he earned and deserved respect from his men. See "He Didn't Know," *The Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), October 14, 1916.

[681] *The Colored American* (Washington, DC), August 25, 1900; "Afro-Americanism," *The Seattle Republican*, September 7, 1900.

efforts to save the souls, as he put it, of the black residents of Lexington.[682] He established a Sunday school for the African Americans of Lexington since state law only permitted gatherings of enslaved persons in the day time and forbade the teaching of reading and writing regarding any subject. He continued to lead these Sunday school classes until he left to fight in the Civil War in 1861.[683]

Jackson's Sunday school classes had a profound effect on those who attended, and his faith influenced some local African Americans in the ensuing decades. Lylburn Liggins Downing, the pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in Roanoke from 1894-1936 drew his religious inspiration from his family's interactions with Jackson. At a young age, Downing became determined to erect a statue honoring the general's legacy as a Lexington citizen, not necessarily his service in the Confederate military. Downing was primarily responsible for the creation of a memorial stained-glass window that was placed behind the altar of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. A small group of Roanoke citizens, including the principals of two local black schools, established a small African American Presbyterian church in 1890.[684] In 1906, after several years of fundraising thanks to the congregation, Downing was finally able to install

[682] Jackson was concerned with the lack of spiritual guidance among Lexington's African American population, so he was determined to create a place for them to worship. Jackson was not advocating for a black Sunday school because of his racial sympathies, but as his wife Anna Jackson put it, "they had souls to save." James I. Robertson is less blunt in arguing that Jackson knew he could not change the social structure of slavery, so he instead displayed Christian decency to those who were in bondage. Nevertheless, Jackson enthusiastically taught his students about the Bible and led them in singing hymns despite his well-known tone-deafness. The class frequently began with the singing of the first chorus of Amazing Grace, and classes ended with the remaining stanzas. In between, Jackson included readings, prayers, and instructions for worship in the hour-long services. See Mary Anna Jackson, *Memoirs of Stonewall Jackson* (Louisville: Prentice Press, 1885), 77-78; James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson*, 167-168; "Genesis: A History of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church on the Occasion of its 115th Anniversary, August 14, 2005," 1, Roanoke Public Library.
[683] "Genesis," 1-2; Robertson, 183.
[684] Isaac M. Warren, *Our Colored People* (Roanoke, VA: n.p., 1941), 31.

the memorial window.[685] This was the first – and perhaps only – instance of an African American church honoring a Confederate hero.[686]

In 1959, a fire destroyed the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church and severely damaged the window. The congregation banded together, restoring the window and placing it at the newly built church on Patton Avenue in Roanoke.[687] In more recent years, some members of the congregation have questioned the window's place in their church. Some wonder why a black church would have such a memorial, while some other, older members see the window as a remembrance of Downing, rather than Jackson.[688] In this sense, it demonstrates that there is still an air of disunion surrounding the memory of the general and Confederacy. Nevertheless, the Lexington black Sunday school offers an interesting caveat in black southern memory of the Confederacy and Jackson.

Davis and Lee were especially polarizing in the postwar era when considering both white southerners and African Americans. Davis' image as a martyr continued because of his incarceration and championing of the "truth" of southern history in the Civil War. Lee was beloved by nearly all white southerners because of his sacrifices during the Civil War and his postwar dedication to the education of white southern youth and future generations of the South. On the other hand, African Americans saw Lee as perhaps the ultimate traitor to the United States. They remembered Davis as a primary facilitator of slavery due to his role in leading the Confederacy. Despite the backlash from African Americans, Davis, and especially Lee, remained nearly unassailable figures from their deaths through the 1940s.

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[685] Warren, 31-32.
[686] *History of the American Negro*, 296; Warren, 32.
[687] "Genesis," 2-3.
[688] "Window on the Past," *Roanoke Times*, January 18, 1993.

Davis's prison life and his service as the Confederate president remained the major talking points of the post-1890 era for white southerners. As was the case when he was still alive, they chose to portray him as an "aged, weak, and suffering man" because of his harsh imprisonment.[689] This was interesting in a culture that valued strength and masculinity. Remembering Davis's imprisonment created sympathy not only for him but also for all for whom he had "suffered." References to his incarceration littered the landscape of post-1890 Confederate rhetoric. In these memories – which ignored his rather well-known attempt to escape custody – Davis willingly gave up two years of his life to suffer for Confederates. For his actions, white southerners claimed that he had become "consecrated" in their minds.[690] Furthermore, some argued that he was treated poorly because he was the leader of the South, and the U. S. Government could not punish them all. Instead, he bravely shouldered that burden for them.[691]

Varina Davis authored a two-volume biography of her husband shortly after his death. While she strove to vindicate the Confederate cause without "recrimination" or "revenge," she fiercely defended her husband's memory, describing him as "one of the most patriotic, humane, and benevolent men has been portrayed as a monster of ambition and cruelty."[692] Varina dedicated two chapters detailing the supposed "tortures" that Davis endured in prison. However, they are mostly quotations from Craven's *Prison Life of Jefferson Davis* and a firsthand account of an officer present at Fortress Monroe. At several points in the text, she compared her husband

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[689] T. K. Oglesby, *Captor and Captive; The Shackler and the Shackled. The Truth of History as to the Shackling of Jefferson Davis, Read before the Atlanta Camp of Confederate Veterans* (Atlanta: The Franklin Printing and Publishing Co., 1899), 11.
[690] Oscar L. Bailey, "Jefferson Davis, A Citizen of Mississippi," *The Southern Magazine – Mississippi Number*, vol. 2, no. 11 (May 1936): 16-17, 45. Virginia Historical Society.
[691] See Oglesby, *Captor and Captive*, 9-15; Daisy C. Neptune, *Sketch of the Life of "Kinnie" Smith and "Winnie" Davis* (Parkersburg, WV: United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1934[?]). Virginia Historical Society; Robert McElroy, "A New Davis Letter," *Tyler's Historical Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 1 (July 1935): 22-24.
[692] Varina Davis, *Jefferson Davis, Ex-President of the Confederate States of America: A Memoir* (New York: Bedford Co., 1890), 2:2.

to Moses. Gardner contended that this association "posited him as the leader of a weary, downtrodden people, who, like Moses, had to guide his followers on an exodus to freedom." Furthermore, Gardner notes that Moses died on Mount Nebo before the Israelites reached the promised land, and Davis died before white southerners "redeemed their downfall at Appomattox." In these ways, Varina continuously attempted to bolster the image of her husband as a martyr for the South.

Varina also used her husband's status as a man without a country during the end of his life to her advantage. She wrote that Jefferson did not ask for a pardon because he did not believe what he did was wrong. However, he did urge others to do what was necessary to take care of their families and fortunes. But, as the president of the Confederacy, he refused to ask for a pardon from the United States government. As Varina wrote, "his asking for a pardon as the leader of the Confederacy would have been more significant than the petition of one who had held a less high position, and he would not sacrifice his convictions to expediency." Through his actions and Varina's words, white southerners read that Jefferson embodied their defiant attitude towards the northern victors. By remaining disenfranchised, Davis yet again acted as a martyr for the South.[693]

She also sought to correct the potentially damaging comments made by some of Jefferson's adversaries. Varina wrote that Jefferson "seemed so averse to controversies" that he did not even read the accusations levied by Johnston, Beauregard, and others. Varina Davis, on the other hand, was eager to correct the slights against Jefferson's memory. She dedicated an entire chapter to the accusation made by Joseph E. Johnston in the early 1880s that Jefferson had stolen nearly two-and-a-half million dollars from the Confederate treasury during the fall of Richmond. She complained that Johnston regretted making his comments public rather than

[693] Varina Davis, *Jefferson Davis*, 2:816-18.

admitting he should not have made the baseless accusation at all.[694] Varina treated the matter like it was a court case, providing and citing letter after letter from Johnston, the journalist Frank Burr, and other witnesses attesting to Johnston's accusations as well as Davis's innocence. Although Jefferson avoided controversy and public feuds in his later life, his wife actively defended his reputation in the public sphere with her book. In a way, Varina was Jefferson's sword and shield when protecting his image. However, by time her book was published, he was nearly universally well-liked in the South.

Throughout the postwar era, Davis was often compared to different historical figures, as evidenced by Varina's attempts to draw a parallel between the president and Moses. At times, comparisons between Davis and his one-time political adversary, Abraham Lincoln, divided white southerners. There were some who thought of Lincoln in a rather positive light in the decades after the war ended, mostly due to how Reconstruction was carried out. There were others, however, who claimed that Lincoln's veneration was unfair given Davis did not receive nearly the same accolades despite his supposed effective leadership. J. William Jones, the prominent Lost Cause proponent, criticized an 1899 school textbook for portraying Lincoln as being unsurpassed in "statesmanship, logic, and wit, drawing some comparisons to George Washington." Jones took offense not only to this but the fact that there was no description of "our President…this soldier, statesman, patriot, orator, and Christian gentleman, who was far above Abraham Lincoln in every element of character."[695] Jones's argument attempted to achieve several goals. First, he wishes to place Davis's esteem above that of a well-renowned

[694] Ibid., 2:858-59.
[695] "Letter of Rev. J. William Jones, Giving Some of the Objections to Barnes's Brief History of the United States," *Action of R. E. Lee Camp, No. 1, Sons of Confederate Veterans, and R. E. Lee Camp, No. 1, C. V., in Regard to Barnes's History of the United States, with Review of the History by Rev. J. William Jones* (Richmond: 1895), 8.

president like Lincoln. Second, by comparing president to president, Jones could possibly legitimize the existence of the Confederate nation.

In 1908, Walter L. Fleming wrote an article titled, "Jefferson Davis, the Negroes, and the Negro Problem." Fleming contended that Davis was an ideal and benevolent master. He wrote the common trope that slavery took "savage traits" of the "idle, unmoral, barbarous" African Americans and instilled in them the "white man's superior civilization." He used him as of how a master should treat his enslaved servants. According to Fleming, "never were there more intimate friendships between whites and blacks than between Davis and his servants, as he always called them."[696] Upon Davis's death, a Jacksonville, Florida newspaper published a series of letters between him and a former enslaved servant of the family named Milo Cooper. Cooper wrote letters to Davis exchanging pleasantries and occasionally sending small gifts of fruit. His letters indicate that he treated Cooper with courtesy.[697]

While Fleming used these examples to claim that Davis was the ideal master and kinder to the black "savage" than anyone, his logic is flawed. Like the Sam Davis anecdote, Davis's individual instances of kindness did not negate his

belief in the inferiority of African Americans, that he had one of the largest plantations in Mississippi, or that he served as president of a confederate fighting to maintain slavery.[698] The latter negates Fleming's argument that Davis believed slavery was a temporary part of southern society. After the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation, he told the Confederate Congress that Lincoln's actions were "the most execrable measure recorded in the history of guilty man." Furthermore, he referred to the newly emancipated freedpeople as "an inferior race, peaceful and

[696] Walter L. Fleming, *Jefferson Davis, the Negroes, and the Negro Problem* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1908), 3.
[697] Fleming, *Jefferson Davis, the Negroes, and the Negro Problem*, 21-22.
[698] For evidence of Davis's ownership of enslaved people, see Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 452.

contented laborers in their sphere" and argued that they were thus "doomed to extermination" and "encouraged to a general assassination of their masters."[699] At various times during the postwar era, Davis called freedpeople "poor creatures," was troubled by the "obtrusive insolence" of freedmen and women, and said that there was no southern hatred or intolerance of blacks.[700] Davis was kind to African Americans who were directly associated with his family or whom he knew on a personal level. To the millions he did not know, Davis used language that was in line with other white supremacists of his time.

Fleming used Davis as the symbol of the benevolence of slavery and to downplay the role slavery played in dividing the country. Mirroring Fleming, the African American community used his image to battle Jim Crow and systematic racism in the United States. W. E. B. Du Bois, a prominent black scholar and activist, wrote numerous critiques of the South and southern veneration of the Confederacy. However, his baccalaureate disquisition at Harvard, "Jefferson Davis as a Representative of Civilization," was perhaps one of the most accurate analyses of the U.S.'s racial caste system. Importantly, he reasoned that Davis is the perfect representation of what is wrong racially in the country. He referred to him several times as a "typical Teutonic Hero," indicating that Davis is, in fact, not unique. Instead, he simply perpetuated the institution of white-and-black slavery that existed throughout much of the world at some point. They remembered him as "the peculiar champion of a people fighting to be free in order that another people should not be free."[701] Davis is a perfect example to use in DuBois's critique of racial

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[699] Davis to Congress, January 12, 1863, in Rowland, ed. *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist*, 5:409. Extermination quotation comes from Richard H. Wilmer, *The Recent Past from a Southern Standpoint* (New York: T. Whittaker, 1887), 223-24.

[700] "Creatures" found in John Joseph Craven, *Prison Life of Jefferson Davis, Embracing Details and Incidents in His Captivity* (New York: G. W. Dillingham Co., 1905), 193-94. The argument that the South did not hate blacks can be found in a letter from Jefferson to Varina Davis, November 26-27, 1865. Found in Allen, *Unconquerable Heart*, 471-72. For more on this discussion, see Cooper, *Jefferson Davis, American*, 603, 642-43, 657-58.

[701] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Jefferson Davis as a Representative of Civilization, June 1890," (Harvard University, 1890), 3.

injustice in the United States. He was the president of a rebellious faction that seceded because they wished to maintain slavery and a racial hierarchy. As such, those who remembered Davis in a positive light consciously argued in favor of the continuation of slavery. Just as he was the singular representation of the Confederacy, so, too, was Davis a singular representative of racial hierarchy and injustice in the United States. In this sense, his memory was utilized by whites and blacks to further their own agendas.

As the era of the New South progressed, white southerners increasingly cemented Lee's image as a true gentleman of the South one of the greatest men in American history through their writing and oratory. The rector of Washington and Lee College, William A. Anderson, remarked in 1907 that Lee was the "greatest man of the century which gave him to mankind" and the "very incarnation" of the Confederate cause. Even the descendants of his enemies, Anderson continued, have "come to recognize the greatness and goodness" of him."[702] With Lee's piety as a primary weapon, they frequently alluded to his Christian character taking precedence over his military duties. By leaning on Lee's character, particularly his piety, and moving away from his military accomplishments, they disassociated him with the military and rebellion linkage while emphasizing his humanity and making him more loveable and relatable.

Noted Lee biographer and preacher J. William Jones frequently made use of Lee's piety in perpetuating the Lost Cause. He recounted that while he commanded the Army of Northern Virginia, he ordered that all military duties were to be suspended on the Sabbath except those that were "absolutely necessary to the subsistence of the army."[703] During a battle with the Army of the Potomac near the end of November, Lee allegedly observed a group of soldiers knelt in prayer despite fire from sharpshooters bearing down on them. Upon seeing this, he removed his

[702] William A. Anderson, "Tribute to General Lee as a Man," in Riley, ed., *General Lee After Appomattox*, 197.
[703] Jones, "Letter of J. William Jones…," 184.

hat, dismounted his horse, and joined the men in prayer when the battle was becoming increasingly dangerous.[704] Whether embellished or outright false, these types of fanciful stories were commonplace in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, used to bolster the nobility of the Lost Cause and its heroes. Contemporary histories frequently reprinted these stories without verifying the accuracy, actions that some historians have decried.[705] In modern times, these whimsical, and sometimes far-fetched, stories are clearly literary devices, but at the time of their publications, these fictional tales blended into the factual narrative.

Robert E. Lee, Jr.'s 1904 compendium of his father's life through his personal letters is especially notable in that it is one of the first major volumes that does not emphasize his role in the Civil War as his greatest contribution to the South. Instead, Lee, Jr. dedicates only a third of the volume to his father's role in the Civil War. The latter part of the book discusses his roles as a husband and father, his time at Washington and Lee, and his death. Lee biographies of the nineteenth century typically wrote that his military accomplishments and his role in the rebuilding of the South ought to be remembered equally. By the early twentieth century, biographies and memorializations of him tended to focus more on his humanity and personal traits rather than his military exploits. Gamaliel Bradford's 1912 book, *Lee the American*, maintained that his mark on American society was "far deeper and more permanent than a military one."[706] Bradford does depart from traditional Lee worship of the era in that he contends that his life "will always be regarded as a record of failure." However, he clarifies that despite

[704] Jones, 185.
[705] Alan T. Nolan argued that the willingness of contemporary historians to publish second- and third-hand accounts of Lee, many which were brought to light long after they had occurred, prolonged the Lost Cause myth. As a result, many historians, even in the last 50 years, have perpetuated the notion that Lee was superhuman in nature. Nolan derides these reproductions by jokingly arguing that Lee also rescued a baby bird while under enemy fire, succored a wounded Federal soldier, carried a child from a burning building, stopped his march to play with children during the war, and stopped to pray with soldiers in the face of Federal artillery fire (this, however, may have been true). See Alan T. Nolan, *Lee Considered: General Robert E. Lee and Civil War History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 172-174.
[706] Gamaliel Bradford, *Lee the American* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), 195.

this failure, Lee is remarkable in that he stands out in a society that worships success.[707] By largely excluding the military aspect of his life, and his subsequent rebellion against the United States, white southerners created a new narrative of Lee that highlighted his love for the Union and his gentle, pious nature that resonated with a new southern generation and northerners. To this new generation, Lee was no longer the rebel general. Instead, he was the ideal American who did his duty and worked to make the South prosperous.[708]

Despite Lee's stellar reputation amongst most of the white southern community, he was not free from criticism, especially from among his former comrades. Since approximately 1870, former Confederate General James Longstreet bore the brunt of white southern ire due to the perception that he was responsible for the defeat at Gettysburg, which he readily blamed Lee for. He also switched his allegiance to the Republican Party and endorsed his close friend, Ulysses S. Grant, for the presidential nomination. His former colleague, Daniel Harvey Hill, wrote to a southern newspaper, "Our scalawag is the local leper of the community. Unlike the carpetbagger, he is native, which is so much the worse."[709] One of the most divisive books published in the era of the New South was Longstreet's memoir, *From Manassas to Appomattox*. The accusations that Longstreet was responsible for the defeat at Gettysburg originated in years after the war, but the accusations became much more hostile after Longstreet published his book in 1896. The publication excited some in the South, as white southerners were generally excited when a new study of the Civil War entered circulation. As it was with a vast majority of these memoirs and studies, they presumed that Longstreet's memoir was another affirmation of Lost Cause rhetoric.

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[707] Bradford, 265.
[708] See Robert Edward Lee, Jr., *Recollections and Letters of General Robert E. Lee, by his son, Captain Robert E. Lee* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1904).
[709] Hill letter to the Montgomery *Daily Advertiser*, August 7, 1868. For more on Longstreet's shift, see William L. Richter, "James Longstreet: From Rebel to Scalawag," *Louisiana History: The Journal of Louisiana Historical Association,* vol. 1, no. 3 (Summer, 1970): 215-230.

It is safe to say that many of those who subscribed to this belief did not read Longstreet's book before commenting. Former Confederate General John Bratton believed that Longstreet, except for Lee, was the most capable person to write a history of the Army of Northern Virginia.[710] If Bratton would have looked closer at the text, he would have seen that Longstreet was quite critical of Lee and readily blamed him for the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg. In recounting the Battle of Gettysburg, Longstreet claimed that failure in the battle rested upon his shoulders because Longstreet repeatedly cautioned him against assaults upon the Union positions on the second and third days. Rather than listen, Longstreet wrote that it was clear that he "was excited and off his balance [which] was evident on the afternoon of the 1st, and he labored under that oppression until enough blood was shed to appease him."[711] Longstreet received some support over the years from certain white southerners, but a vast majority shunned him as a primary factor in their ultimate defeat.[712]

Longstreet's treatment of Lee was even more poorly received than his alliance with the Republican Party. "He is ambitious to appear what he is not – the real hero of the great war," wrote one newspaper. "He is jealous of greater men, and does not fail to strike at the highest [Lee]."[713] He consistently shouldered the blame for the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg throughout much of his later life. The circumstances of the battle and Lee's image were the primary factors in his scapegoating. The Battle of Gettysburg, especially Pickett's Charge, is

[710] "From Manassas to Appomattox," *The Charlotte Observer*, April 29, 1896.
[711] James Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox: Memoirs of the Civil War in America* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1903, orig. 1896), 383.
[712] See, for example, a letter to Longstreet from J. S. D. Cullen, Richmond, May 18, 1875. Cited in Longstreet, 383. The letter states, "It was an astounding announcement to the survivors of the First Army Corps that the disaster and failure at Gettysburg was alone and solely due to its commander, and that had he obeyed the orders of the commander-in-chief Meade's army would have been beaten before its entire force had assembled, and its final discomfiture thereby made certain. It is a little strange that these charges were not made while General Lee was alive to substantiate or disprove them, and that seven years or more were permitted to pass by in silence regarding them. You are fortunate in being able to call upon the adjutant-general and the two confidential officers of General Lee's staff for their testimony in the case, and I do not think that you will have any reason to fear their evidence…I hope, for the sake of history and for your brave military record, that a quietus will at once be put on this subject."
[713] "Longstreet's Book of Malice," *The Wilmington Messenger* (Wilmington, NC), January 24, 1896.

considered by many historians to be the high-water mark of the Confederacy.[714] At that point, the Confederacy perhaps had its best opportunity to win the war if the Army of Northern Virginia defeated the Army of the Potomac, as there would have been no army standing between Lee and Washington, DC. Furthermore, his veneration by white southerners prevented most criticism of his commanding abilities. Dissenters were pushed aside as former Confederates wrote numerous articles and gave speeches glorifying Lee as a brilliant tactician. So, when Longstreet, the already-hated scalawag and loser of Gettysburg, wrote in his memoir that Lee was to blame for the defeat, Lee's supporters quickly attacked him.

The willingness of the white South to attack Longstreet is unsurprising when considering the rise of the Lost Cause and the veneration of other leaders like Jackson, Lee, and Davis. As Lee and Davis were actively, and symbolically after their deaths, reinforcing traits of the Old South and legitimizing the actions and beliefs of the Confederacy, dissenters like Longstreet were cast out. Although Longstreet initially offered to shoulder the blame for Gettysburg in late-July 1863, Lee later proffered that if he had listened to Longstreet more closely during the battle, "how different all might have been."[715] However, Lee rarely, if ever, publicly stated this sentiment, and Longstreet continued to draw ire from much of the South after the war.[716] It was not until the 1870s when a more public account of his and Longstreet's words were published.

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[714] See Allen Guelzo, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013); Gary W. Gallagher, ed. *Three Days at Gettysburg: Essays on Confederate and Union Leadership* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1999); Joseph T. Glatthaar, *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Collapse* (New York: Free Press, 2008); Stephen W. Sears, *Gettysburg* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003); Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg – The Second Day* and *Gettysburg: Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987 and 1993, respectively).

[715] Longstreet's offer comes from a letter to his uncle, July 24, 1863, later published in the *New Orleans Republican*, January 25, 1876. Lee's response came from a letter to him in January 1864, published in the *New Orleans Republican*.

[716] On at least one occasion, Lee told singular former Confederates of his regret in not heeding Longstreet's advice. See, for example, letter from Captain T.J. Goree to Longstreet, winter 1864, published in *New Orleans Republican*. An article in *Eclectic Magazine* also recounted an interview with Lee during his presidency at Washington College in which he allegedly claimed, "If I had taken General Longstreet's advice on the eve of the second day of the battle of Gettysburg…the Confederates would to-day be a free people." *Eclectic Magazine*, May 1872, cited in Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox*, 401.

The fact that these letters were published in a Republican newspaper may have diminished the amount of readership they received.

In the meantime, Lost Cause peddlers attacked Longstreet any way they could in order to elevate Lee's reputation. As William Garrett Piston put it, by shifting the blame from Lee to Longstreet, these supporters could portray him as a "sort of pure and stainless hero that the Southern people, evolving from Lost Cause rationale, were beginning to expect."[717] Critics generally pointed to Longstreet intentionally delaying his marches or his attacks that were directed by Lee, which essentially disrupted the entirety of the battle plan he came up with.[718] The animus towards Longstreet dwindled significantly in the early 1900s as white southerners came together to form a cohesive Lost Cause narrative that would have been threatened by infighting.[719] Nevertheless, the intensity by which Lee's allies attacked Longstreet are critical in understanding the lengths to which they

defended him even against his own former comrades.

While whites in the South continued to venerate Lee as the ideal American, African Americans harshly rebuked his memorialization. Some understood why he was remembered so fondly. They viewed Lee as more of a misguided figure or someone who had good virtues about

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[717] William Garrett Piston, *Lee's Tarnished Lieutenant: James Longstreet and His Place in Southern History* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1990), 117. Argument found in Aaron Lewis, "Chain of Command: An Analysis of Robert E. Lee and His Corps Commanders in the Civil War," Master's Thesis, Bowling Green State University, 2016, page 93.

[718] See, for example, Jubal A. Early, "Causes of Lee's Defeat at Gettysburg: A Review by General Early," *Southern Historical Society Papers*, vol. 4, no. 6 (Dec. 1877): 241-281; Jubal A. Early, "Supplement to General Early's Review. Reply to General Longstreet," *SHSP*, vol. 4, no. 6 (Dec. 1877): 282-302. The entirety of the Fourth Volume is an analysis of the Battle of Gettysburg, and it is quite unanimous that the fault lay with Longstreet and, quite frankly, anybody other than Lee. There are also numerous other articles scattered throughout the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s in response to Longstreet. Some of them are direct rebuttals to letters Longstreet wrote on his behalf. See, for example, Fitzhugh Lee, "A Review of the First Two Days' Operations at Gettysburg and a Reply to General Longstreet by General Fitz. Lee," vol. 5, no. 4 (April 1878): 162-203.

[719] See "Honor of Lee: Birthday of Distinguished General Fittingly Celebrated," *The Semi-Weekly Messenger* (Wilmington, NC), January 22, 1904. Longstreet was one of two former Confederate Generals honored by those in attendance. This indicates that, at least on the surface, Longstreet was once again in the good graces of white southerners and the Lost Cause. This lends credibility to white southerners forgiving past incidents, as Longstreet's memoir had been published less than 10 years prior.

him, such as dedication to duty and his faith, but who nevertheless fought for the institution of slavery. Some also praised him for his role in breaking up several would-be lynchings on the campus of Washington College.[720] Sometimes newspapers would publish neutral stories about the three figures, such as an excerpt of a southern biography of Jackson, the history of the Lee estate, or the story of how Lincoln spared two of his sons when they were captured by Union forces.[721] Most African Americans, however, castigated Lee. In their criticism, two major themes emerged: Lee was a traitor to his country and a perpetuator of the institution of slavery. While Jackson and Davis were occasionally wrapped up in this criticism, Lee received the brunt of it.

Certain members of the white northern press conducted interviews with former enslaved servants of the Lee family to portray him as a perpetuator of slavery and its evil practices. A New York *Tribune* investigative piece which was more like a way to entrap Lee based on his racial views wrote that he was guilty of general mistreatment and inflicted brutal punishment on returned runaways.[722] The enslaved people that came into his possession when his father-in-law, George Washington Parke Custis, died in 1857 resented Lee. Instead of the lax Custis, Lee was a harsh disciplinarian who felt that the slaves must work hard instead of simply working for their livelihood. Rather than manumit them, as some suspected he might, he instead hired them out to

[720] "General Lee is Revealed as Foe of Lynch Law," *The Chicago Defender*, July 10, 1926. The article recounts a story: "A very popular young student, a son of Judge Brockebrough, professor of law, got into a difficulty with a Negro and was badly shot. His life was despaired of. As soon as the news of the assault reached the college, four hundred students, with a brother of the wounded boy at the their head, searched for and captured the trembling wretch, and with a rope around his neck, marched through the streets of the town to the courthouse square, with intent to wreak their vengeance on the man. It was in vain that the college and town sought to calm the frenzied mob and induce them to turn over the Negro to the officers of the law. Just then General Lee appeared. Immediately the general, standing in the midst of the excited throng, simply said: 'Young gentlemen, let the law take its course.' The quiet words had the effect of a military order, and the Negro's life was saved." Also see "General Lee and Lynch Law," *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 7, 1926 and "General Lee is Revealed as Foe of Lynch Law," *Atlanta Daily World*, March 11, 1934.

[721] See "Stonewall Jackson," *The Washington Bee*, March 24, 1894; "Birthplace of Robert E. Lee," *The Washington Bee*, March 23, 1907; "National Cemetery," *The Washington Bee*, June 17, 1908; "Saved Life of Lee," *The Appeal* (St. Paul, MN), Feb. 6, 1904; "Lincoln Saved a Lee," *Richmond Planet*, Oct. 24, 1903.

[722] Recount of the *Tribune* article found in Douglas Southall Freeman, *R. E. Lee: A Biography*, (New York: C. Scribner's, 1936), I:390-92; and Joseph C. Robert, "Lee the Farmer," *The Journal of Southern History*, vol. 3, no. 4 (Nov. 1937): 435.

other nearby plantations. The enslaved persons harbored grudges against him for several reasons. First, they had no idea where they would be sent and for how long. Second, the constant hiring out of enslaved persons fractured the tight-knit slave families at Arlington. In doing so, Lee shattered the Washington and Custis tradition of respecting slave families. In response, many slaves refused to cooperate and ultimately protest openly. As some of them put it, Lee was a "hard taskmaster" and "the worst man I ever see."[723]

In the postwar era, and especially in the post-1890 era, African Americans criticism of Lee largely adhered to the major themes of treason and slavery. Some believed that although he outwardly remained neutral on slavery, he nevertheless fought to keep it intact.[724] On more than one occasion, African Americans likened Lee to Benedict Arnold, the famous traitor of the American Revolution. As one Chicago newspaper put it, let the people who "sing his praises…thus cast themselves in the category of those who love traitors."[725] They also wrote about the comparisons between Robert E. Lee and George Washington, although it was never positive. To them, one made the decision toward human progress, and the other chose the path that attempted to keep humans in bondage, rebuking the idea that the two figures were alike and worthy of equal praise.[726] While African Americans made it a point to deny Lee that association, they sometimes felt it necessary to associate other prominent Americans, such as Ulysses S. Grant with the famous founding father.[727] At other times, they associated Lee with the potential destruction of the United States, a far cry from Washington's deeds. During the 1872 presidential

[723] Robert E. Lee to "My dear Son," [WHFL], San Antonio, August 20, 1860, George Bolling Lee Papers, Virginia Historical Society; slave quotations found in Walter Creigh Preston, *Lee: West Point and Lexington* (Yellow Springs, OH: The Antioch Press, 1934), 76. See also Robert, "Lee the Farmer," and Elizabeth Brown Pryor, *Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters* (New York: Viking, 2007), 263-64, 266-67.
[724] "Lincoln's Love of Humanity Contrasted with that of Robert E. Lee and Sam Houston," *Afro-American* (Baltimore), March 18, 1933.
[725] "Listen, World: Robert E. Lee," *The Chicago Defender*, January 25, 1930. See also "Reviving Old Issues," *The Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), August 21, 1909.
[726] "Lee," *Crisis*, vol. 5 (March 1912), 200.
[727] See, for example, "The Union Victories," *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, PA), April 8, 1865.

campaign, the black abolitionist Peter H. Clark criticized candidate Horace Greeley who at point proclaimed that he hoped to see the day when Americans would be proud of the deeds of men like Jackson and Lee. Clark vehemently disagreed and wondered how anyone running for president could exalt men who "sought to destroy this great Nation."[728]

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As a student of history, Woodrow Wilson was well-versed in the history of the Confederacy, although he was also swept up in Lost Cause rhetoric prevalent at that time. In 1909, then-Princeton President Wilson gave an address praising Lee as a general and a man, continuing the process of humanizing him that his nephew, Fitzhugh, began in 1904. Since Lee became a "national hero," Wilson wrote, there were no longer sections in the United States.[729] Instead, Wilson normalized the veneration of Lee as an American, not as a Confederate once again blurring the lines between treason and difficult, yet patriotic, decisions. White southerners gravitated to Wilson's rhetoric in this speech.[730] Wilson doubled down on his veneration of the Confederacy and the South when he screened D. W. Griffith's 1915 film *The Birth of a Nation* at the White House that same year. The film itself was a monumental success despite its heroic portrayal of the Confederacy and the Ku Klux Klan.[731] Of the three major figures in this study, Robert E. Lee is the only one to appear, and it is a short scene featuring his surrender at

[728] Speech by abolitionist Peter H. Clark, *The Weekly Louisianian* (New Orleans, LA), August 24, 1872.
[729] Woodrow Wilson, *Robert E. Lee: An Interpretation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1924. The original address was given on January 19, 1909, Lee-Jackson Day, and appeared in *The University of North Carolina Record* that May.
[730] See "Overman Chosen as U.S. Senator by Legislature," *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), January 20, 1909; "General Lee Not of Land of Dixie Alone," *The Tampa Tribune*, January 20, 1909; and "Birthday of Gen. R. E. Lee," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, January 20, 1909. The latter two, as well as other southern newspapers reprinted the same phrase used in Wilson's speech.
[731] The film was the highest grossing film of all time until it was surpassed by *Gone with the Wind* in 1939. Joel W. Finler, *The Hollywood Story* (New York: Wallflower Press, 2003), 47.

Appomattox. However, there were plenty of films featuring Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis in the first half of the twentieth century.[732] They occured mostly in minor roles, but they embody the same traits often referenced through the Lost Cause: bravery, dedication to the cause, stoicism, etc. Both appear in Griffith's 1930 film, *Abraham Lincoln*, as a minor character. At one point, an aide asks him about the possibility of surrender, and Lee replies, "Surrender? My poor army! Why I'd rather die a thousand deaths than to do that to them." In another scene, an aide informs Lincoln that Jefferson Davis has been captured. Lincoln opts to release him as an act of supposed mercy. [733] These two examples illustrate the reinforcement of Lost Cause rhetoric: Lee loved his soldiers and the Confederacy so much that he could not bear to surrender, and Davis did not deserve the suffering he endured in federal prison. Jackson is conspicuously absent, but it is certainly possible that Lee filled the "soldier" role in films, and Davis filled the "leader" role.[734]

Drama also reinforced the heroic trope of the three figures. Perhaps one of the stranger plays written was "The Romance of Jefferson Davis" in 1939. Created by Ralph V. Brown, the play itself takes place during the late 1820s and early 1830s, when he met his first wife, Sarah Knox Taylor, the daughter of Zachary Taylor. Brown's play belabors Davis's humanity, but his introduction reiterates many Lost Cause tropes. Notably, he perpetuates the frequent notion that he suffered mightily while in federal prison, likening his captors to that of Pontius Pilate and thus likening Davis to Jesus Christ.[735]

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[732] See, for example, Rosen, *The Dramatic Life of Abraham Lincoln* (1924), Bacon, *The Heart of Maryland* (1927), Ayres, *Hearts in Bondage* (1936), Curtiz, *Santa Fe Trail* (1940) and *Virginia City* (1940).
[733] "*Abraham Lincoln* (1930 film)," Wikiquote, https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln_(1930_film).
[734] Lee and Jackson are typically represented in later films such as Maxwell, *Gettysburg* (1993) and *Gods and Generals* (2003). The latter is riddled with Lost Cause tropes in its portrayal of both Lee and Jackson.
[735] Ralph V. Brown, "The Romance of Jefferson Davis," (Whitewater, WI: Ralph V. Brown, 1939). Virginia Historical Society. The full quotation reads, "Future generations, upon reading the words of Jefferson Davis, uttered while he was suffering torture and public humiliation in martyrdom, will recall Pontius Pilate," on page 4.

Twentieth century popular culture stressed the inherent good qualities present in the three men, most notably Lee. His embodiment of bravery, stoicism, and duty manifested in many different avenues of the twentieth century. Plays and radio broadcasts emphasized his "personal nobility and moral courage" rather than his military exploits.[736] Numerous poems captured the essence of Lost Cause rhetoric, and songs utilized catchy tunes in order to trap the words in listeners' heads.[737] Songs like "The Sword of Robert Lee" fostered camaraderie among former Confederate veterans, and newspapers occasionally reprinted the lyrics.[738]

> Forth from its scabbard all in vain,
> Forth flashed the sword of Lee;
> 'Tis shrouded now in its sheath again,
> It sleeps the sleep of our noble slain,
> Defeated, yet without a stain,
> Proudly and peacefully.[739]

These lyrics perpetuated a feeling of loss but not defeat for the Confederacy. It was a way for white southerners to feel sorrow yet maintain their conviction that Confederate ideals were justified.

Lee, An Epic, by Flora Ellice Stevens was an ode to Lee and the Custis family as the leaders of Virginia aristocracy. Stevens' poem begins with the establishment of the Arlington Estate to set the stage for Lee's tale. Her prose emphasizes the major role he played in her life and in the lives of many Virginians, as well as his frequently cited "noble" characteristics:

> His brow – the face that Michel Angelo
> Had loved – the citizen American,

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[736] National Broadcasting Company, "The Cavalcade of America: Robert E. Lee" radio broadcast, April 23, 1940. Virginia Historical Society. See also John Drinkwater, "Robert E. Lee: A Play," (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd., 1923).
[737] See, for example, L. Rieves and B. A. Whaples, "Stonewall Jackson's Prayer" (1861); M. Deeves, "Stonewall Jackson's Prayer" (1865); Unnamed Robert E. Lee poem, D. S. Freeman family papers, Virginia Historical Society; Isaac W. Heysinger, "The Vision of Robert Lee," (Philadelphia, PA: n.p., 1916). Virginia Historical Society.
[738] See "The Sword of Robert Lee," *The Record-Union* (Sacramento, CA), May 17, 1896; "The Sword of Robert Lee," *The Gaffney Ledger* (Gaffney, SC), October 16, 1914; "Lectured in Nashville," *Nashville Banner*, March 23, 1928.
[739] A. J. Ryan and A. E. Blackmar, "The Sword of Robert Lee" (1861).

> The courtly country gentleman,
> The modest, simple, true, unworldly,
> Great Virginian,
> My youth's ideal, Lee of Arlington.
> When he was all the world to me,
> And all the world war Robert Lee.[740]

Stevens further emphasizes closeness she feels with Lee's memory by dedicating the poem to her father, "who loved him," and her uncles, "who followed him."[741]

Isaac W. Heysinger's "The Vision of Robert E. Lee" portrays him as a great man with the resolve to better his country after the war, an admittedly common theme in southern culture. Although it criticizes him for adhering to Virginia, he ends the poem by describing him having made the decision to work toward reunification. At the end of the poem, Lee hears a voice from God telling him to lead the United States into a new era of reunification:

> He heard a whisper, 'All is gained,'
> a part was lost, the whole remained,
> take up thy task and help!' A tear
> stole down, 'I see my duty clear,
> I WILL!' He rose up from the tree
> and gazed around; his reverie
> and vision passed, the twilight came,
> and Lee rode forth to loftier fame.[742]

Heysinger was a Union captain present at Lee's surrender at Appomattox in 1865. Coming from a former Union soldier, Lee's portrayal as a misguided American who dedicated his postwar life to reunification is important in considering the rehabilitation of his image. To Heysinger, his decision to help reunify the country effectively made up for his role in the Civil War. However, the praise for Lee despite his role in the destruction and death of thousands of Heysinger's fellow soldiers demonstrates the drastic reconstruction of his memory approximately fifty years after the war.

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[740] Flora Ellice Stevens, *Lee, An Epic* (Kansas City, MO: Burton Publishing Company, 1917), 31.
[741] Stevens, Dedication page, no page number.
[742] Heysinger, "The Vision of Robert E. Lee," stanza 25, page 8. Virginia Historical Society.

Jackson had less representation in popular culture than Lee and Davis did. Aside from songs like "Stonewall Jackson's Way" and "Stonewall Jackson's Grand March," he was relatively absent from southern popular culture. One notable poem published in 1936 was "Stonewall Jackson – Are You Dead?" The Elsie Duncan Sanders-written poem evokes mourning over the loss of the South's beloved Jackson. But it also assures readers that his actions and ideals were present in the southern history of the war. The poem is as follows:

> Stonewall Jackson, you are not dead.
> We say to every southern breeze.
> You have only passed over the River to rest
> 'in the shade of the trees.'
> Your challenge is ringing across the years
> to all who are facing sore defeat.
> 'Give them the bayonet.' echoes still
> and halts retreat.
> Son of the South, you are not dead.
> You live on the pages of history
> and our children's children shall learn from you
> lessons in courage and piety.[743]

Just as "The Sword of Robert E. Lee" redirected feelings of sorrow and loss of the cause towards perpetuation of the Lost Cause, "Stonewall Jackson – Are You Dead?" redirected grief and mourning into comfort that Jackson's spirit was still alive in southern minds.

Perhaps the most lasting memory of Lee was the one created by Douglas Southall Freeman.[744] Freeman was born in Virginia in 1886, and he exhibited a keen interest in southern history from a young age. His father served four years in the Army of Northern Virginia, his family lived in Lynchburg near Jubal A. Early's home, and his family moved to Richmond in 1892 at the height of the memorialization movement. He earned a Ph.D. in history at Johns

[743] Elsie Duncan Sanders, "Stonewall Jackson – Are You Dead?" *The Southern Magazine – West Virginia Number* 2, no. 9 (April 1936): n.p. Virginia Historical Society.
[744] For more on Freeman, see David E. Johnson, *Douglas Southall Freeman* (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 2002) and Keith D. Dickson, *Sustaining Southern Identity: Douglas Southall Freeman and Memory in the Modern South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

Hopkins University in 1908 at the age of 22. In 1909 he joined the *Richmond Times-Dispatch,* and he became the editor of the *Richmond News Leader* in 1915, a position he held for 34 years.[745] His upbringing and his regional connection to Lee helped him create one of the most popular and definitive biographies of Lee at the time it was published in 1934 and 1935.[746]

Freeman's first major contribution to the field of southern history was the publication of *Lee's Dispatches* in 1915. Five years earlier, noted Confederate memorabilia collector Wymberly Jones De Renne approached Freeman with a leather-bound volume of over two hundred unpublished Civil War letters from Lee to Davis. De Renne wanted Freeman to examine and publish them.[747] An opportunity to produce and disseminate new information about Robert E. Lee and the South led Freeman to accept the offer almost immediately. "I assure you," Freeman wrote to De Renne in mid-June 1910," that nothing will give me more pleasure than the co-operation in an undertaking…which will be of such great value to the people of the South."[748] Southerners widely praised *Lee's Dispatches*. One review stated, "It would be difficult, if not impossible, to overestimate the importance of the recently issued book, "Lee's Dispatches…," while another thanked Freeman for reiterating, "General Robert E. Lee was not only a great military genius but also a very honorable and just man."[749] They also thanked De Renne for bringing his collection into the public and clarifying the historical narrative of the Civil War.[750]

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[745] David Johnson, "Douglas Southall Freeman," *Encyclopedia Virginia*.
[746] See Bruce Catton, "Douglas Southall Freeman," *Military Affairs,* vol. 17, no. 2 (Summer 1953): 57, for more.
[747] William Harris Bragg, "'Our Joint Labor': W. J. De Renne, Douglas Southall Freeman, and Lee's Dispatches, 1910-1915," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 97, no. 1 (January 1989): 4-5.
[748] Douglas Southall Freeman to W. J. De Renne, June 14, 1910. In Bragg, 8.
[749] "Lee's Unpublished Dispatches," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond), August 5, 1905; "Davis and Lee," *Macon Beacon,* August 27, 1915.
[750] See "Some Recent Publications Received by The Post," *The Houston Post,* June 6, 1915; *Atlanta Constitution,* November 4, 1915. Lillie Noble Jones wrote to her cousin, De Renne, "how fortunate you were in your selection of Mr. Freeman! How well he writes, & how competently, & how he loves Gen Lee!" Letter from Lillie Noble Jones to W. J. De Renne, August 6, 1915. In Bragg, 31.

The success of *Lee's Dispatches* opened new doors for Freeman, who had struggled to find steady academic work following the completion of his doctorate. In late November 1915, E. L. Burlingame, a representative of Charles Scribner's Sons publishing company, asked Freeman if he would be interested in "contributing a life of General Lee" to accompany a proposed series of biographies of prominent Americans.[751] Freeman responded with great enthusiasm, although the endeavor took nearly twenty years to culminate. Freeman spent countless hours meticulously researching his life. The result was what one newspaper termed "a new Lee," one that was younger and not the older, suffering man to whom most southerners had grown familiar.[752]

The massive, four-volume biography of Lee was released in two parts – two volumes in 1934 and two volumes in 1935. Freeman's biography was a smashing success, and he became the first southerner to win the Pulitzer Prize in 1935.[753] The United Daughters of the Confederacy, still a strong force in Confederate memorialization, held numerous public events during which prominent scholars reviewed the biography.[754] White southerners welcomed a new portrayal of Lee, one that was more "human" and "sociable" than the older, cold general that was often prominent in recollections. Instead, Freeman highlighted lesser-known traits of Lee such as his penchant for being in the company of young women or holding conversations with female neighbors. Although these details were published decades earlier, Freeman's research and writing style made them more agreeable for public consumption. Therein lay the appeal of Freeman's biography. Despite its incredible length, reviewers often noted that his volumes read

[751] E. L. Burlingame to Douglas Southall Freeman, November 22, 1915. In Bragg, 32.
[752] "Books to Own," *Bristol Herald* (Bristol, TN), November 4, 1934.
[753] John M. Taylor, "Lee's biographer is a story himself; Richmond News Lead editor's books extensively documented," *The Washington Times*, July 2, 1927. The award was bestowed upon Freeman for a biography "teaching patriotic and unselfish services to the people, illustrated by an eminent example."
[754] "Morrissett to Review New Biography of Lee," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), October 30, 1934; "Norvell to Review Dr. Freeman's 'Lee'," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), November 17, 1934.

like novels while retaining the information one might expect in an academic work.[755] Reviewers maintained that the biography "should stand in the front rank of American biographies."[756]

At the same time, Freeman's biography was deeply flawed. Overall, his interpretation of Lee was quite similar to that of Jubal A. Early's Lost Cause interpretation. While Freeman's Lee was more flawed than previous iterations, he still exhibited many of the same heroic and noble characteristics prominent in the fanciful stories about Lee from the late 1800s and early 1900s. At certain points in the biography, Freeman blames Lee for certain failures on the surface, but a closer examination really pushes the blame onto others. "Humble in spirit," Freeman wrote, "he had sometimes submitted to mental bullying. Capable always of devising the best plan, he had, on occasion, been compelled by the blundering of others to accept the second best…His consideration of others, the virtue of a gentleman, had been his vice as a soldier."[757] For Freeman, poor Lee's real weakness was his conviction to always act gentlemanly while allowing his subordinates (read: inferiors) to mentally bully him into a different, weaker plan. In reality, Lee made his own mistakes, which Freeman occasionally acknowledged, but they were of his own volition, not the supposed manipulation Freeman perpetuated.

As historian Bruce Catton wrote after Freeman's death, "It would be foolish to pretend that Dr. Freeman's history was at all times completely objective. It was scholarly and it was fair, but it was never detached or passionless."[758] Freeman unknowingly acknowledged the widespread use of Lost Cause rhetoric in his writing by claiming a debt to the *Southern*

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[755] Comment about reading like a novel from historian H. J. Eckenrode in "The Definitive Biography of Lee," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), February 24, 1935. See "Books to Own," *Bristol Herald* (Bristol, TN), November 4, 1934; "'R. E. Lee' Proves Monumental Work," *Nashville Banner*, October 28, 1934; "The Real Thing," *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal* (Lubbock, TX), October 14, 1934, noted "Here, at last, there seems to be the real Robert E. Lee."

[756] "A Literary Event," *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), October 5, 1934.

[757] Douglas Southall Freeman, *R. E. Lee: A Biography*, 4 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934-1935), 4:168.

[758] Catton "Douglas Southall Freeman," 57.

Historical Society Papers, arguing that they contained "more valuable, unused data than any other unofficial repository of source material on the War Between the States."[759] While some valuable information was retrieved from the *SHSP*, the vast majority of its publications were riddled with a Lost Cause ethos engendered by its founder, Early. Even if Freeman set out to produce a neutral image of Lee, his tainted source base prevented him from doing so.

At the same time, there were other instances of Freeman subscribing publicly to Lost Cause tropes regarding Lee. When asked about receiving the Pulitzer Prize for his biography, he remarked that "I shall be very happy if…this award brings again to public emulation a man who embodied courage, decision and a willingness to pay the price of loyalty to his convictions."[760] On another speaking occasion before the Virginia General Assembly, he referred to Lee as "our Southern [King] Arthur."[761] While it is understandable and even natural to develop a sort of affection for a historical subject to which one has devoted much of their time, Freeman's veneration of Lee of almost no different than that of the generation that came before him. His hyperbolic rhetoric, which influenced numerous historians through the turn of the millennium, indicates that the Lost Cause was still alive and well entering the 1940s.[762] Freeman's reputation as a scholar and his blending of historical fact and Lost Cause fiction created a ripple effect that felt in the 1940s, 1950s, and beyond. Not until the final decades of the twentieth century would

[759] Freeman, *R. E. Lee: A Biography*, 4:558. See also Gary W. Gallagher, "Jubal Early, the Lost Cause, and Civil War History," in *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000) for more on the subject of Freeman's repetitive use of Early's *SHSP*.
[760] "Dr. Freeman is Pulitzer Prize Winner," *The Bee* (Danville, VA), May 7, 1935.
[761] Douglas Southall Freeman, *The Lengthening Shadow of Lee: An Address Before a Joint Session of the General Assembly of Virginia* (Richmond: Division of Purchase and Printing, 1936), 4.
[762] See, for example, Paul D. Casdorph, *Lee and Jackson: Confederate Chieftains* (New York: Paragon House, 1992); Ernest B. Ferguson, *Chancellorsville 1863: The Souls of the Brave* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992). For more debate about Nolan's harsh combatting of "the Lee tradition," see Gallagher, "Jubal Early, the Lost Cause, and Civil War History," 40-45.

Lee, Jackson, and Davis undergo a necessary revisionist transformation at the hands of historians.[763]

* * *

From the 1890s and onward, the white facilitated the dissemination of a Civil War narrative that helped them cope with defeat. This reimagined narrative facilitated the cult-like following of Jackson, Lee, and Davis by many throughout the country. These three men were not remembered in their truest forms, as traitors to the United States, but as patriotic, although perhaps misguided, Americans who deserved to be remembered along the lines of true American heroes like Ulysses S. Grant and Abraham Lincoln. Most importantly, by juxtaposing the positive qualities of Jackson and Lee, such as their service to the United States before the Civil War, Lee's role as president of Washington College, Jackson's sole identity as a Christian soldier who did his duty regardless of his affiliation, white southerners effectively masked the questionable postwar deeds of Davis. Take, for example, his penchant for preaching Lost Cause rhetoric and arguing for the legality of secession. By remembering Jackson and Lee as American patriots, they effectively normalized the Confederacy and secession while portraying Davis as being on the same moral level as the two soldiers.

The process of memorialization among older and newer generations of the white South began to divide by the early 1900s. The older generation largely memorialized Jackson, Lee, and Davis in ways that emphasized their shared experiences of the Civil War. The United Confederate Veterans praised the three men as leaders of the cause for which they collectively fought. Ladies' Memorial Associations in the South established cemeteries for and monuments

[763] Connelly's *The Marble Man* was arguably the first major revisionist analysis of Lee. Nolan's *Lee Considered* followed Connelly's lead and helped kick-start an era of revisionism of Lee.

to the Confederate dead who were likely their friends or relatives. Despite some outliers, the veneration of the three men was largely rooted in fact, even if some embellished or sensationalized the finer details. New generation historians such as Freeman fed into the altered memory of Lee, and by association the Lost Cause, by adhering to primary and secondary sources that were intentionally skewed by former Confederates. By reading a narrative of the end of the Civil War in which Lee's numbers were lowered and Grant's numbers grossly inflated, the younger white southerners had no reason to doubt that Lost Cause rhetoric was fact. This directly aided the perpetuation of Lost Cause rhetoric well into the late nineteenth century and fostered avenues of thought that were unequivocally false.

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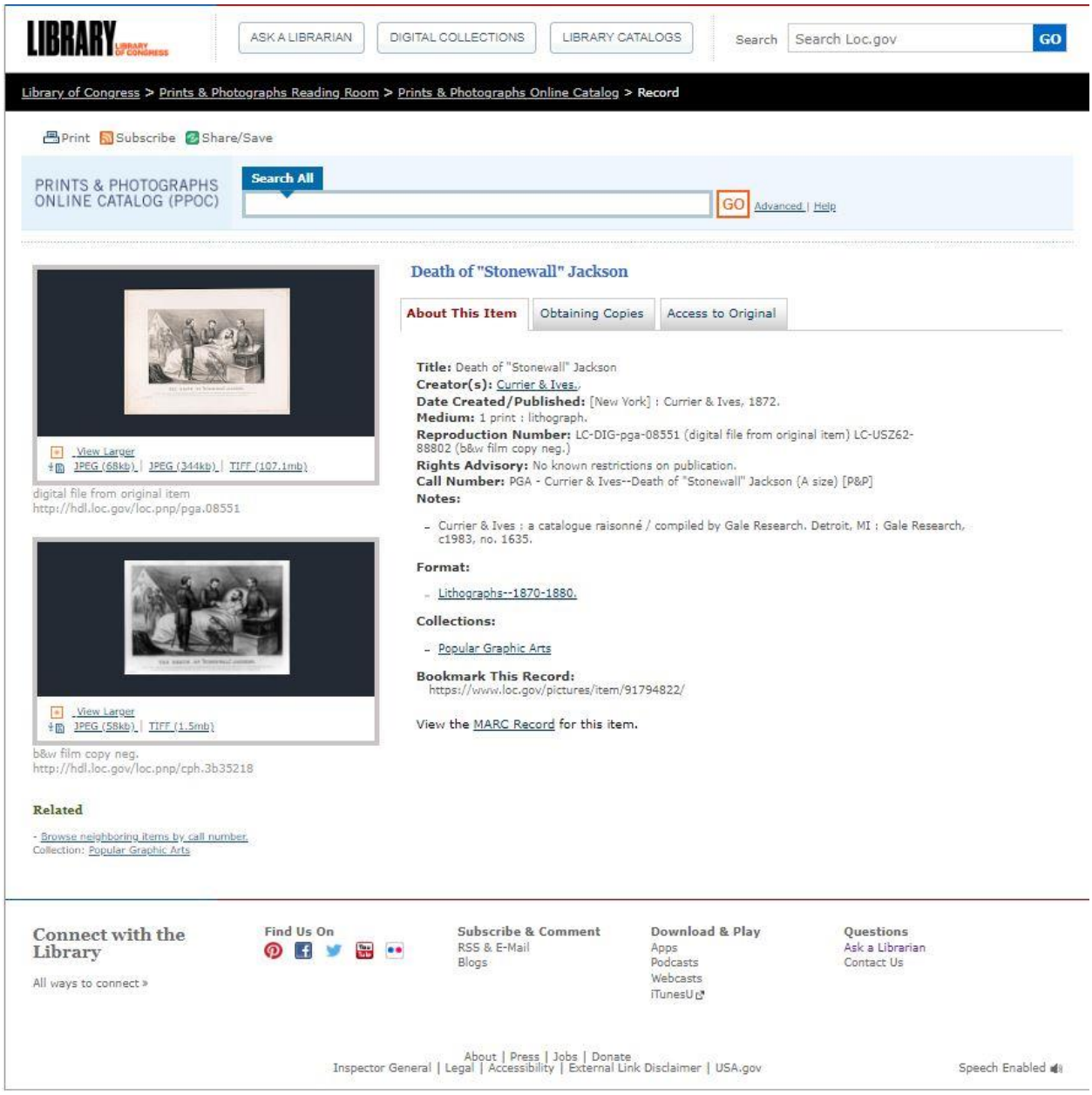

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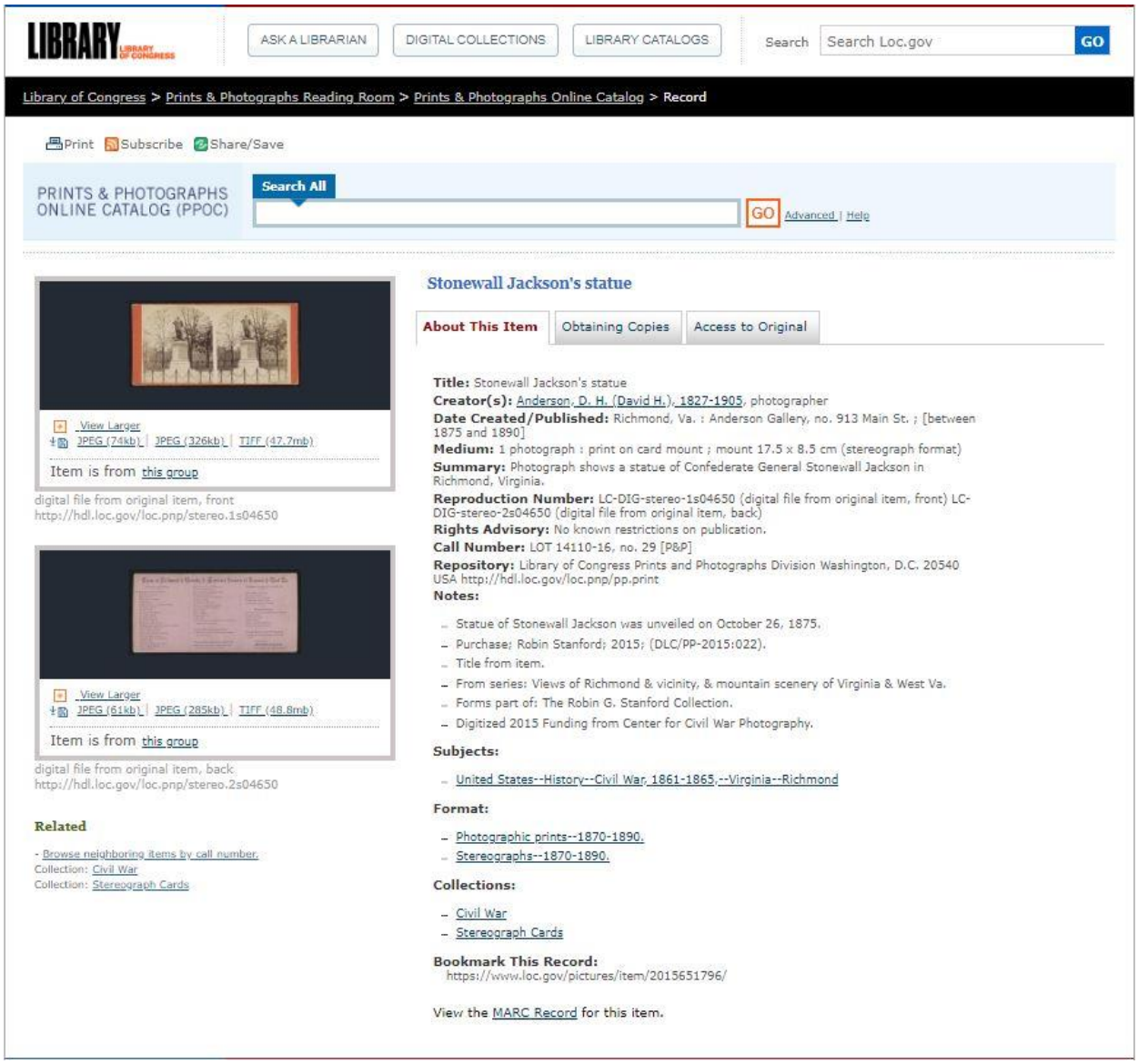

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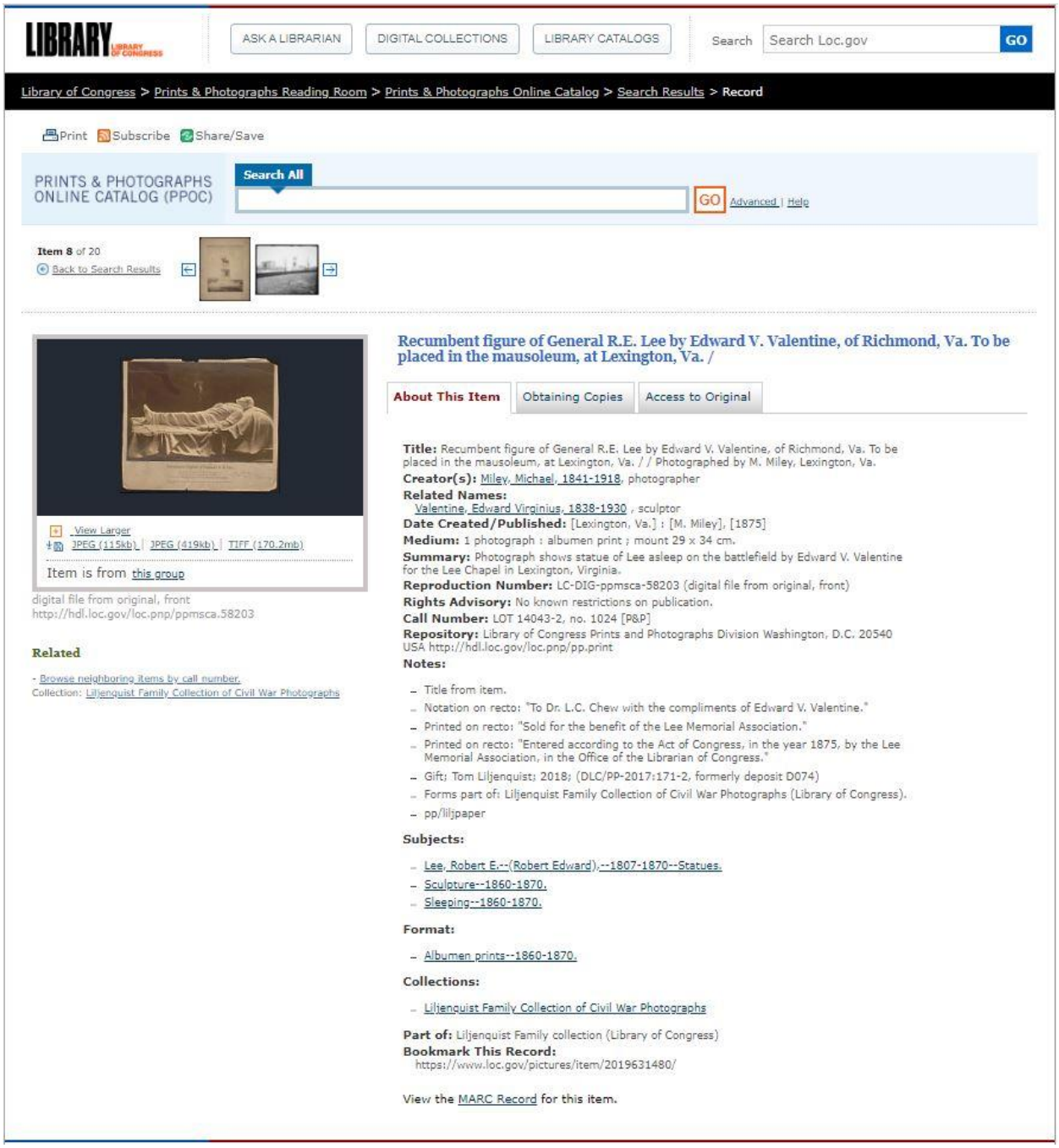

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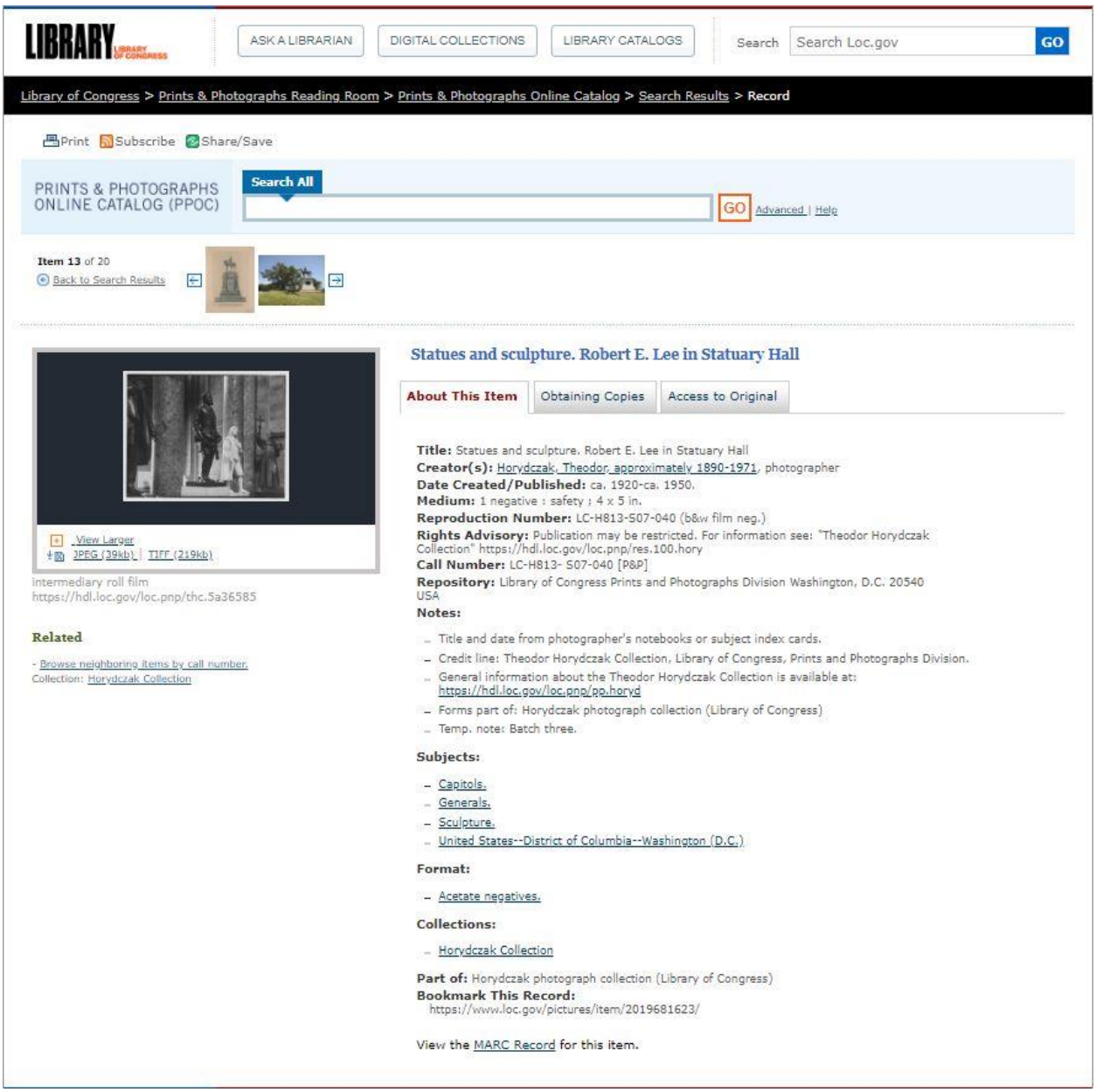

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